Chronicles

July 2005

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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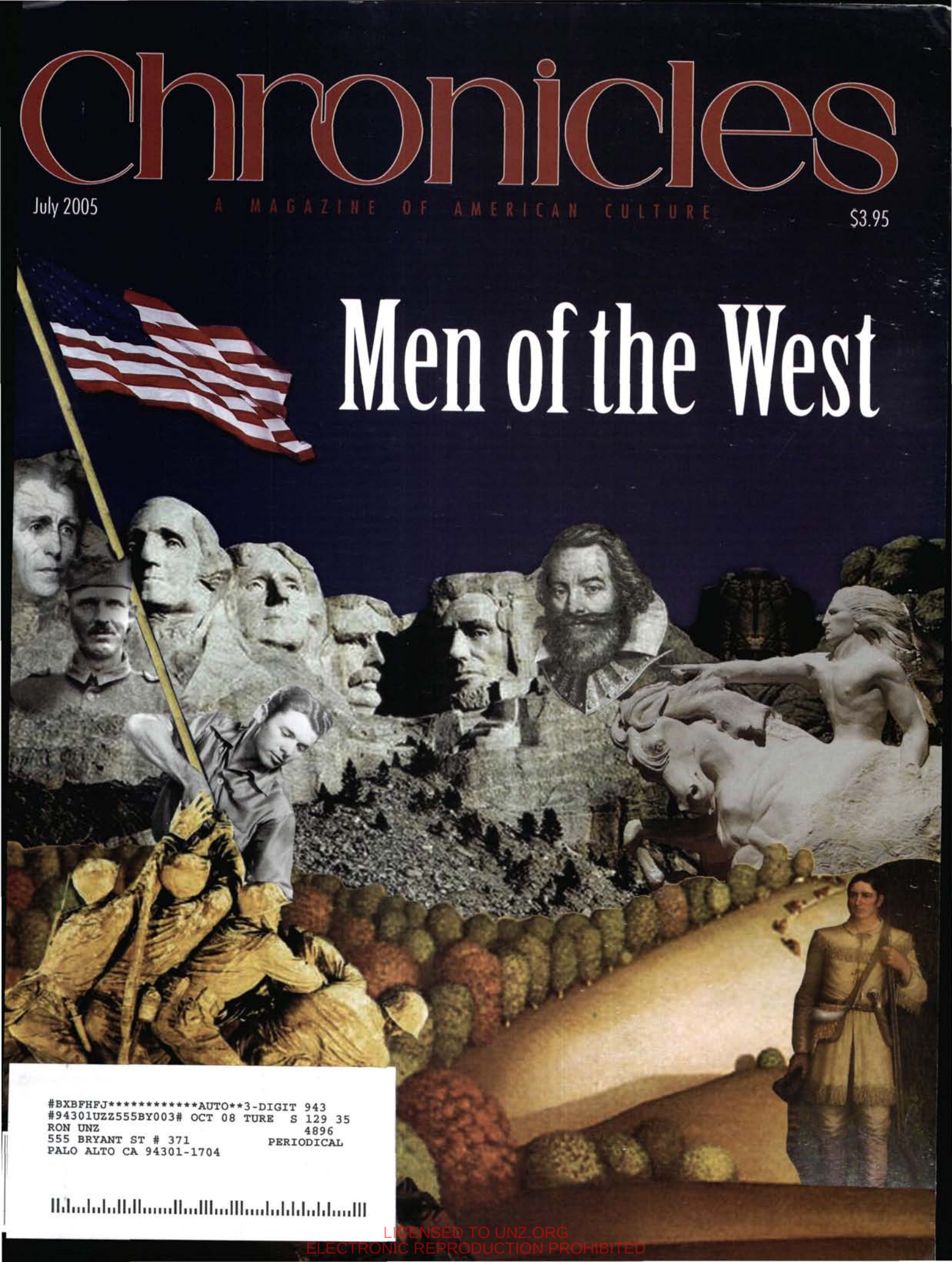
Men of the West



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Chronicles' Back Issues, Tapes, and Books

* The 15th Annual Meeting of The John Randolph Club *

HOW THE WEST WAS WON—Audiotape—From Thermopylae to Tours, from Lepanto to Midway, historian Roger McGrath offers a stirring survey of the response of Western civilization to times of crisis. When things seem most desperate, the West has never failed to marshal its fighting spirit so that liberty can prevail. McGrath offers these accounts in the context of the resurgence of Christendom's great enemy, Islam.
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THREATS FROM ABROAD—Audiotape—*Chronicles'* foreign-affairs editor, Srdja Trifkovic, lays bare the reality of the motives and methods of Islam and proposes the radical policies necessary if this threat to America is to be stopped. Economist William Hawkins, in "China: Economic and Military Threat," offers a startling account of China's pending economic dominance that will lead to hegemony in the Pacific Rim.
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THEIR MANNERS AND OURS—Audiotape—*Chronicles'* senior editor for books Chilton Williamson, Jr., decries the utter abandonment of manners in post-Christian America and offers advice for living in such a world, while *Chronicles'* editor Thomas Fleming draws on themes from his latest book, *The Morality of Everyday Life*, to offer life lessons for Christians living in a world of widespread moral decay.
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PRESENTATION OF THE FIRST JOHN RANDOLPH AWARD: "SCRATCHING FOR FLEAS: AMERICAN HISTORIANS AND THEIR HISTORY"—Audiotape—Dr. Clyde Wilson offers a moving reflection on the role of the historian as the storyteller to whom the identity of a people is entrusted. For his own work in this regard, the John Randolph Club presents Dr. Wilson with its first John Randolph Award.
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THE 15TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE JOHN RANDOLPH CLUB: "ENEMIES OF THE WEST FROM THE ALAMO TO KOSOVO"—Eight Audiotapes—The complete proceedings of the John Randolph Club's 2004 meeting in historic San Antonio (tape #s RIJ1, RIJ2, RIJ3, RIJ4, RIJ5, RIJ6, RIJ7, RIJ8). Includes a tribute to the heroes of the Alamo: Travis, Bowie, and Crockett. A $100.00 value.
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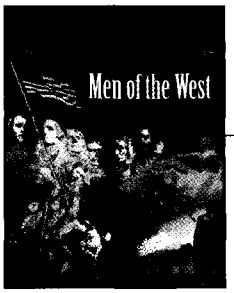

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Cover and inside illustrations by Melanie Anderson.

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A publication of The Rockford Institute.
Editorial and Advertising Offices:
928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.
Website: *www.chroniclesmagazine.org*
Editorial Phone: (815) 964-5054.
Advertising Phone: (815) 964-5813.
Subscription Department: P.O. Box 800,
Mount Morris, IL 61054. Call 1-800-877-5459.

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Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture (ISSN 0887-5731) is published monthly for $39.99 (foreign subscriptions add $12 for surface delivery, $48 for Air Mail) per year by The Rockford Institute, 928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061. Preferred periodical postage paid at Rockford, IL and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Chronicles, P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054.

The views expressed in *Chronicles* are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute or of its directors. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE
Vol. 29, No. 7 July 2005
Printed in the United States of America

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Letters and Guns

In a letter to the editor (*Polemics & Exchanges*, May) Henry Heatherly says that, in my March *Sins of Omission* column, "A Hero Among Heroes," I refer to Audie Murphy firing a .50 caliber machine gun from "a German tank destroyer" and thus made a mistake, because the caliber of German machine guns on their tank destroyers was 7.9 mm. For the record, I said only that Murphy climbed onto a "burning tank destroyer" and fired its .50 caliber at the oncoming Germans. I thought that it was clear that the tank destroyer was one of ours. If not, my mention of the tank destroyer's .50 caliber should have made it obvious.

—Roger D. McGrath
Thousand Oaks, CA

On Enlightenment Critics

It is always enjoyable to read the perceptive Dr. Paul Gottfried. I have just one correction, though, to his review of Christopher Olaf Blum's edited anthology of French counterrevolutionary thought, *Critics of the Enlightenment* ("Counterrevolutionary Light," *Reviews*, April). The French political philosopher Philippe Bénéton, not Blum, is the author of the Foreword to the book which Dr. Gottfried finds so problematic. It would be a mistake, I think, to assume that Blum and he are of one mind regarding the prospects for, or desirability of, a "conservative liberalism." The feasibility of such a cultural project, of course, is well worth debating, and I am grateful that Dr. Gottfried, as one might expect, does not shrink from that task.

—Jeremy Beer
Editor in Chief, ISI Books

On Millennial Misrepresentations

Once again, Church historian Aaron D. Wolf slanders evangelicals with his essay "The Christian Zionist Threat to Peace" (*Views*, May). Using the classic ploy of quoting from a dictionary-type source in his introduction allows him to set up his own dispensationalist straw man to knock down in the rest of his polemic.

Mr. Wolf does not really tell the reader what dispensationalism or premillennialism means, but he does get to employ the word *apocalypse* a few times and act highbrow by denigrating the *Left Behind* series—all to marginalize evangelicals.

I'll try to offer such a definition in two sentences. Premillennialism comes from a literal interpretation of Scripture and entails a belief that Jesus Christ could return at any moment. When taken in its literal, historical, grammatical sense, God's Word declares that Jesus Christ's return is imminent and that, following His return for His Church, He will return seven years later to establish His literal millennial kingdom on this earth.

Mr. Wolf even goes so far as to say that this evangelical eschatology must be flawed because—Heaven forfend—it is not taught in the Episcopalian or Roman Catholic Churches! Well, maybe that fact alone proves that evangelicals are on to something or have been for quite some time. Mr. Wolf should be more worried about a belief system that says nothing when people venerate images in the efflorescence of leaky water pipes in cement on the wall of a Chicago expressway viaduct than about pro-family, Bible-reading evangelicals.

Don't worry—I still look forward to your magazine each month.

—Suzie Tinaglia
Park Ridge, IL

Chronicles is the only magazine that will even mention Christian Zionism, much less shed some light on this heresy. I am amazed that the whole Arminian side of the professing Christian church is "bewitched" by this fable.

You would think that one of their evangelists would have stumbled across the third chapter of Galatians, which says (verse 16): "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He sayeth not, And to seeds as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

Then, in verse 29, Saint Paul adds, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." It is pretty clear that the promises ("great

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nation"; "I will bless them that bless thee"; "in thee shall all the nations be blessed"; *etc.*) were made to a *spiritual* seed, through Christ, and not to the carnal seed.

—*Lionel Ledbetter*
Adamsville, AL

Mr. Wolf Replies

The goal of my article was not to define dispensationalism, nor to slander my evangelical friends, nor to explain why I am a Lutheran and not a Roman Catholic or an Episcopalian (all of which hold that "Jesus Christ's return is imminent"), but to offer criticism of Christian Zionist leaders, who do not present serious, Bible-believing Christians with any other option than to give their undying support to the Likud government. Entire ministries are built around keeping Christians convinced that they must support Israel or else God's wrath will fall on America. Why else would the Christian Coalition encourage American Christians to spend thousands of dollars in order to spend a day with the Israeli Defense Force instead of giving that money to their own local churches in order to support the preaching of the Gospel?

Mrs. Tinaglia seems to confuse dispensationalism with premillennialism, which might explain why she found my use of Charles Ryrie's definition of *dispensationalism* to be unsatisfying. Premillennialism simply holds that, after the Lord returns, He will rule the Earth for 1,000 years, before enacting a final judgment and recreating a New Heaven and a New Earth. It is only when dispensationalism is added to the mix that we get the seven-year Tribulation, the "rapture," and the restoration of "Israel." Even still, there are three varieties of dispensationalism: "pre-Trib" (those who believe Jesus will conduct the rapture before the Tribulation); "mid-Trib"; and "post-Trib." Nonetheless, the most common position among evangelicals (reflected in the *Left Behind* series and by Mrs. Tinaglia) is the dispensational, pre-Tribulational, premillennial position. Historic premillennialists, on the other hand, do not hold that Scripture requires the restoration of the nation or state of Israel.

It is important to note that even if the relatively new theology of dispensationalism (it dates to the mid-19th century) were the proper "literal" interpretation of Scripture, dispensationalists need not lend their financial and political support to the secular state of Israel. In other words, dispensationalists need not be Christian Zionists.

Mr. Ledbetter's interpretation of Saint Paul's Letter to the Galatians is a reflection of the Church's traditional—and literal—understanding of "Israel" in Scripture. Interpreting the Bible "to the letter," the grammatical-historical approach championed by Martin Luther (certainly no dispensationalist) does not require us to take every word at face value, something that even dispensationalists do not do (else they would be looking for a "literal" seven-headed dragon to emerge from the sea). Rather, the theologian, in Luther's words, "should take pains to have one definite and simple understanding of Scripture and not to be a wanderer and vagabond, like the rabbis, the Scholastic theologians, and the professors of law, who are always toiling with ambiguities." There is nothing ambiguous about the passages quoted by Mr. Ledbetter, especially for those of us who approach the text with the firm conviction that the subject of every page of Scripture is Christ—crucified, risen, and (literally!) coming again. As for the word *apocalypse*: It's Greek to me.

Announcing . . .

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For more information call, Christopher Check, executive vice president, at (815) 964-5811 or visit *www.ChroniclesMagazine.org*.

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by Srdja Trifkovic

The Real Issue With the *Newsweek* Koran Fib

The obvious moral of the *Newsweek* affair is that journalists, and leftist journalists (the common type) in particular, are habitual liars unworthy of respect. To those of us interested in Balkan affairs, the whole Koran to-do elicits a wry smile. Front-page stories from the 1990's, including countless fact-free accounts of "Bosnian rape camps," "Kosovo genocides," and "Racak massacres," were far more pernicious inventions, but they remain largely unchallenged to this day. *Newsweek*'s fib caused a dozen or two overexcitable Muslims to die rioting against the Great Satan; those Balkan lies, by contrast, caused a country to be bombed and a Christian nation to be demonized. Yes, *Newsweek* is a bad magazine; journalists are riff-raff—so what's new?

Three generally overlooked points still need to be made, and I will present them in ascending order of importance.

The first point is technical: The Koran cannot be flushed down a regular toilet. That much should have been obvious from the outset. It is a book of at least 400 pages, and a bilingual Arabic-English edition—which is, presumably, the general-issue Koran used in the alleged proceedings—may have over 1,000 pages. (If there isn't a G.I. Koran, I'd recommend Marmaduke Pickthal's excellent bilingual edition, which is some 900 pages long.) Tearing the Koran into just a few thick chunks of, say, 100 pages each and trying to flush it that way would cause an instant clog on the first attempt. The torturer would require a motorized snake to continue the procedure, likely causing the suspect to become even more contemptuous of the infidel and, therefore, more intransigent.

Tearing two, three, or four hundred individual leaves from the book and flushing them methodically one by one would be more refined as a torture technique (I can visualize it as the key scene in Michael Moore's *Guantanamo!*), but it is still an almost impossible task. You would have to crumple them first—uncrumpled, they would cause a clog in no time—but even if you reduced them to a small ball and flushed them individually, after a dozen, you would need a plunger, and, after 30 or 40, you would have the Mother of All Clogs. By the time you were done, the suspect would be in tears—not of pain or sorrow, but of laughter. Devout Muslims may not be renowned for their sense of humor, but a farce is universally funny.

It does not take a Sherlock Holmes to smell a rat. The hoax is transparent, on par with Jimmy, "8 years old and a third-generation heroin addict, a precocious little boy with sandy hair, velvety brown eyes and needle marks freckling the baby smooth skin of his thin brown arms," according to the memorable front-page story from the *Washington Post* of September 28, 1980. As *any* inner-city dweller could have told you, Ron (Jimmy's mother's drug-dealing "live-in-lover") would never waste ounce upon ounce of expensive powder—readily convertible into hard cash—on his girlfriend's son's habit, and he would not have encouraged the boy to develop the habit unless the kid was old enough to go out and beg, steal, or borrow enough money to keep the habit funded.

The second neglected point with regard to *l'affaire* Koran is that we take Muslim outrage for granted when their scripture is allegedly desecrated, yet we fail to be moved, let alone outraged, when Muslims routinely kill Christians and other non-Muslims and destroy their heritage, their sacred books, and their shrines. Over the past two decades alone, Muslims have put to torch some 200 Christian churches in Kosovo, including the entire library of the Prizren Seminary with its thousands of volumes, including precious illuminated manuscripts 700 years old. They have blasted those Buddhas in Afghanistan with 155 mm artillery. They have attacked Christian churches and killed worshippers in Pakistan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sudan, Egypt, and Bosnia, and they have decapitated Christian priests in Chechnya. For Muslims to gloss over an endless stream of outrages committed by their coreligionists against others, and promptly to work themselves into paroxysms of rage over the toilet story, takes some nerve. For the West to tolerate this is indicative of a decayed spirit.

The third and most significant point is that the Koran is a vile book. It has caused more death, suffering, and misery over the centuries than any other book, *Mein Kampf* and *The Communist Manifesto* included. It is well deserving not of some ugly and meaningless act of "desecration" but of a careful reading and somber analysis. It breathes the air of the desert; it enables us to hear the battle cries of the Prophet's followers as they rushed to conquer, kill, enslave, and rob millions of Christians in Asia, Africa, and Europe; and it helps us understand what makes Muslims tick and why there can be no truce with *jihad*.

To a Muslim, as Allah's direct and unadulterated word, the Koran cannot be subjected to textual analysis and critical evaluation. From the point of view of orthodox Islam, the claim that a quotation is taken out of context (*e.g.*, "do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends," or "fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them") is incongruous because there is no "context." Looking for one in the word of Allah would be blasphemous.

For a non-Muslim, it is hard to see how the Koran is an improvement over, or advancement on, the moral teaching, language, style, and coherence of the Old and New Testaments. It reads like a construct entirely human in origin and intent, clear in its earthly sources of inspiration and the fulfillment of the daily needs of its author. The Koranic "revelation" that non-Muslims are not allowed to understand the book sits especially oddly with Allah's countless commands regarding the unbelievers: "[S]trike off their heads; then when you have made wide slaughter among them, carefully tie up the remaining captives."

The violent message of the Koran is a problem for us as well as for the Muslims. We cannot solve it for them, and we should not be asked to deem the problem solved by pretending that the book is a pacifist tract. Humans are capable of reinterpreting scripture when absolutely necessary, but, until the oil dollars support a line of Islamic exegesis that can renounce the ideals of *jihad*, terror, murder, *dhimmitude*, and slavery, we must have the guts to call a religion of war by its right name. c

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SOME REPUBLICANS object to using the term *nuclear option* to describe their plan to end filibusters on the Senate floor during confirmation hearings, but the image of total war is a fitting one for the possible direction of the "upper chamber" these days.

The 11th-hour compromise between the squishes in both parties will only serve to hold off a return to the state of nature until a Supreme Court vacancy arises. Then, bedlam will ensue, and both sides may deploy their nuclear weapons: For the Democrats, that's a filibuster; for the Republicans, a rule change castrating the filibuster.

There is plenty of blame to go around for the lack of comity in the Capitol, and, indeed, the escalation bears some semblance to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict: Democrats threaten to grind the Senate to a halt because Republicans are changing the rules because Democrats are disregarding tradition by filibustering judges because Republicans delayed many of Clinton's judges—and so on.

No conservative can advocate the GOP nuclear plan with a happy heart. Republicans have little more respect for tradition than they do for federalism. Chipping away at the filibuster would, in the long run, expedite the process of How a Bill Becomes a Law—which cannot be good for the country. But the Democrats have gone nuclear already with their filibusters based on lies. The Republicans would be in the right to drop a fat boy.

This is not a grudge match. The battle over appellate-court nominations (where all the filibusters are occurring) and the Supreme Court battle for which it is the cacophonous prelude truly are something of a political Armageddon for both sides.

Some of the media and the moderates, such as Judiciary Committee Chairman Arlen Specter, claim the fighting is so fierce because all the rhetoric and all the maneuvers have put both sides in the position where neither is willing to lose face by backing down—akin to an after-school rumble. The better analogy would be Thermopylae: In the culture wars, the left is holding on to one last position of power within government, and they will protect it by any means necessary.

The Democrats have asserted all along that the ten nominees they have filibustered are only a small batch of "extremist" judges out of the 218 conservative men and women President Bush has nominated. This is dishonest. The nominees the Democrats have denied up-or-down votes are no more conservative or less qualified than many they have let pass. They are, in fact, arguably the best and the brightest by many standards—and that is exactly the point.

Janice Rogers Brown, a black woman with a compelling life story and a razor-sharp intellect, won the support of 76 percent of Californians in her last retention election. She is Supreme Court material. To the left, that means she must be stopped now. The moderates' deal let her nomination to the D.C. Court of Appeals pass, to the chagrin of the Democratic leadership.

Democratic memos obtained quietly from a server left unprotected show us their thinking. In one memo, a Democratic staffer wrote: "Miguel Estrada was especially dangerous, because he has a minimal paper trail, he is Latino, and the White House seems to be grooming him for a Supreme Court appointment."

What does the left fear from a conservative court? They say the rights of workers and women would be taken away. They try to scare people about what Janice Brown's America would look like. In truth, however, conservative Supreme Court justices—who, these days, are mostly in the business of dissenting from federal and judicial power grabs—cannot *do* anything to you.

George W. Bush can launch wars, and the attorney general can order your phone tapped. John Paul Stevens can put you at risk of arrest if you lead a prayer at a high-school football game, and David Souter would force your children's Boy Scout troop to accept homosexual scoutmasters. But Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia would leave most standing law alone and limit the reach of the Interstate Commerce Clause.

That is the problem. NARAL, People for the American Way, and a few other left-wing groups call the Democrats' shots on the judges, as those memos show. Their agenda includes abortion on demand, homosexual marriage, consigning the free exercise of religion to behind closed doors, and a long list of liberal fantasies that would never win in the ballot boxes or the legislature—not even in today's relativistic society.

Everywhere that homosexual marriage has won, it has been on the power of a court overruling the people or their representatives. NARAL knows that, without *Roe* v. *Wade* and its companion decisions, aborting a nine-month-old, fully viable fetus by the process of "Dilation and Evacuation" would likely be outlawed in many parts of the country.

The radical left, which bankrolls the Democratic Party, needs activist liberal judges. Anybody more restrained than Sandra Day O'Connor might hand these issues back to the people and the states, respectively. For the generals of radical social change, that is a threat worth going nuclear over.

—*Timothy P. Carney*

THE L.A. MAYORAL ELECTION has been misunderstood and misrepresented by the national media, which rarely understands the consequences of events taking place in California, a state that functions more like a separate nation. The media portrayed former California Assembly speaker and L.A. city councilman Antonio Villaraigosa's landslide victory in May as a national example for other politicians as well as a reflection of growing Latino power.

Newsweek, for example, reported in a May 30 cover story that, "Faced with such GOP incursions, Democrats will be studying Villaraigosa's formula for victory, hoping to replicate it in other races nationwide—where the terrain may be more challenging than two Democrats squaring off in a Left Coast city."

Well, the latter part of the sentence is certainly true, but I would love to know what Democrats will learn in a city so devoid of a Republican presence that the GOP did not even field a candidate, although one independent and unknown primary candidate was, technically, a Republican.

Here is one potential lesson: Continue to embrace open borders and the simultaneous expansion of the welfare state, and your city (or county or state) will become increasingly Latino, and, eventually, Latinos will win high office. Consider that almost 50 percent of Los Angeles residents are Latino, even though, as *Newsweek*

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notes, only about one quarter of the electorate is Latino.

Is it that big of a surprise that Villaraigosa could somehow piece together a victory, especially since the other constituencies (blacks in South L.A., Jewish voters in the San Fernando Valley, and white liberals in West L.A.) he had to piece together share a similar political ideology?

To his credit, Villaraigosa did not play the ethnicity card—although he really did not need to, as city residents have long accepted the massive demographic shifts. Recent controversy ensued over a billboard erected by a Spanish-language television station that crossed out the word *California* and replaced it with *Mexico*—to boast of its coverage of Los Angeles, Mexico.

The understandable anger at the billboard came mostly from those living outside the city of Los Angeles—and the county. With its more than nine million residents, L.A. County has undergone similar demographic shifts, which explains why inland areas are becoming increasingly conservative as the middle class heads to the counties of San Bernardino and Riverside. Those within the city probably shrugged at the billboard, just as they shrug at the boasts by some Latino activists that Los Angeles is, for all intents and purposes, a Mexican city.

So, the victory of the former speaker of the California Assembly does not say much in the short term about Latino politics, and it does not offer any real lessons for Republicans or Democrats other than that massive demographic shifts will result in massive political change.

The real story of the election is far simpler. James Hahn has been an incompetent, bumbling mayor. He reeled from charges of corruption within his administration, and he alienated his prime constituency when he fired a popular African-American police chief. Hahn has followed in the footsteps of recalled Gov. Gray Davis, another white liberal technocrat who won election as a moderate (by L.A. standards) but then spent his time placating the increasingly surly and demanding public-sector unions.

Crime is down in Los Angeles, but the economy is stagnant as stifling regulations practically invite businesses to move out of the city. Given the number of independent cities surrounding Los Angeles, many businesses have located just outside the border. L.A. independent journalist Jill Stewart had it right when she told a local talk-show host that the most important fact about the election is that not a single elected L.A. official has much interest in or sympathy toward business.

They are all lefties. None is able to deal with the massive problems of a bloated educational system that functions more like a vast complex of prisons; the closure of one emergency room after another, largely because of illegal immigration; high taxes; burdensome regulations; traffic congestion; and more.

Hahn has only made things worse. As Stewart mentioned, during Hahn's term, 75 percent of all the city's new revenues went to increased pay and pensions for its existing workforce, rather than for new services. Who can blame voters for wanting a change, even if that change is unlikely to result in better policies?

Given the choice between a left-wing white guy with a bad track record and no personality and a left-wing Latino guy with a bad track record and a charming personality, they chose the latter. While that does not offer any broad political lessons, perhaps, it is closer to the truth than the preconceived conclusions drawn by the national media.

—*Steven Greenhut*

EMBRYONIC STEM CELLS are always a controversial topic, especially when politicians wrangle over whether the government should support the practice of harvesting them. Some argue that only embryonic stem cells are valuable, while others have shown that research employing adult or umbilical-cord-blood stem cells has greater success. This debate is not about facts, however, but about the very nature of the human person.

Recently, the U.S. House of Representatives chose to support a full-scale funneling of tax dollars to pay for the direct killing of human embryos so that their stem cells could be used for research. While you and I might see immediately that such a decision is inhumane, others would tell you that it is the only right thing to do.

Among the many political types, Hollywood figures, and media personalities who advocate killing embryonic children, the argument goes something like this: *Extra embryos are not doing anybody any good right now. Using them for scientific research is not only reasonable but necessary in our quest to find cures for such diseases as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. Those fanatics who oppose our position are cruel; they do not want to see suffering relieved.*

Of course, there is no evidence that a single research project involving embryonic stem cells has produced a positive result, but even if such evidence existed, we still would not be permitted to kill innocent people for the good of others.

The real, and often overlooked, question is not whether scientists should be using human embryos, but where do all of these "leftover" embryos come from?

Every year, thousands of infertile couples try to "get pregnant" using various forms of reproductive technology. *In vitro* fertilization is one of the most popular methods. In every IVF treatment, several embryos are produced using maternal eggs and paternal sperm. A single Petri dish could contain four, five, or more embryonic children, and only one or two of them will be used. Those little ones who are placed in the mother in the hope that they will implant and grow will be those who pass the quality-control test. Only those embryos deemed to be the most promising—that is, free of genetic problems—are used. Those who fail the test wind up in a freezer someplace, or their parents "donate" them to science.

If this sounds strangely macabre to you or makes you feel the least bit uncomfortable, then you may be on to the real problem with current debates over embryonic stem-cell research, for, if there were no IVF therapy, there would be no "leftover" embryos to begin with. The real problem, then, is the process by which these youngest members of the human family come into being. In the world of reproductive technology, each little boy and girl becomes a mechanized product rather than a child conceived through the procreative process designed by the Almighty.

Until those involved in the political rush to "solve" the human-embryo-for-research question address the root cause—IVF—and deal with it by outlawing the procedure, ancillary problems are unsolvable. What is at stake in this debate is not whether the U.S. taxpayer funds the killing of embryonic boys and girls but how man perceives his offspring, now and in the future.

If children are chattel, embryonic-stem-cell research is the tip of the iceberg. If, on the other hand, they are God's gift to marriage, then nothing should stop us from focusing on all the good reasons

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why IVF is immoral and should be outlawed.

—*Judie Brown*

THE FRENCH AND THE DUTCH rejections of the proposed E.U. constitution by referenda (May 29 and June 1, respectively) shook the European neoliberal federation—though it was unwilling to concede defeat: The European Union's Luxembourg presidency and the leaders of France and Germany immediately declared that the process of ratifying the charter should proceed in other countries, regardless of the verdict in those two key founding members. German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder said that he remains convinced of the need for the constitution: "[I]f we want a democratic, social-minded and strong Europe . . . there is no sound alternative." The E.U. "crisis summit" (June 16-17) was expected, at the time of this writing, to reassert the federalists' faith in the project.

The Old Continent's federalist elite is not giving up, but the reality was summed up by Italian Deputy Prime Minister Giulio Tremonti, who declared that "the European Constitution, as it has been presented and managed, is finished."

It is finished indeed, and that news is good. The 400-page E.U. constitution is a flawed document. Had it been ratified, it would have paved the way for a bureaucratic superstate in which each member country's sovereignty, individuality, and dignity would be violated and suppressed.

For instance, the constitution states that "The Member States shall facilitate the achievement of the Union's tasks and refrain from any measure which could jeopardise the attainment of the Union's objectives" (Article I).

Furthermore, "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men prevail" (Article I-10).

Moreover, "only the Union may legislate and adopt legally binding acts, the Member States being able to do so themselves only if so empowered by the Union or for the implementation of Union acts" (Article I-12).

And, finally, "Member States shall actively and unreservedly support the Union's common foreign and security policy in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity and shall comply with the Union's action in this area" (Article I-16).

Admittedly, the motives of many French and Dutch "no" voters had little to do with the nature of the superstate project. Many of them simply wanted to punish unpopular governments for lackluster economic performances. It is nevertheless significant that the "yes" camp could not mount a credible countercampaign based on the argument that "Europe" should not be punished for the domestic shortcomings of President Chirac or Prime Minister Balkenende.

The federalists' failure to capture the imagination of any significant socioeconomic segment, except for the managerial urban elite, is not surprising. It reflects their arrogant belief that, in the end, the "right" decision will be pushed through regardless of *hoi polloi*. They intend to repeat the blueprint of the Danish and Irish E.U. referenda: After each "no" vote, try again and again until you get a "yes"—which is for keeps.

This will not work. In France, a tacit tactical alliance of the old left and the old right has been asserted for the first time since Petain. In Holland, the issues of sovereignty, identity, and immigration were openly raised in the referendum debate, and the genie is now out of the bottle. In what is arguably Europe's most "tolerant" country, the notion that a nation has the right to her own land and customs has become a legitimate mainstream argument. Perhaps Theo van Gogh did not die in vain.

On the economic front, the outcome in France and Holland will have beneficial effects, too. The *dirigiste* Franco-German consensus, the spirit of which was felt in the constitution and whose adherents still dominate in Brussels, will now retreat before a more vigorous competitive spirit favored by Finland, Ireland, and a few new members in Eastern Europe. If the CDU's Angela Merkel unseats Schröder in September, as seems likely, Germany will join them by introducing much-needed tax and labor-law reforms. More importantly, Germany will cease to underpin the eastern end of the old Paris-Berlin axis. That would pave the way for center-right reformer Nicolas Sarkozy, Chirac's archrival, to bring a breath of fresh air into the Elysee Palace in 2007.

There is no rational reason why the European Union has to proceed on the road of ever-tighter political and social integration. It has removed internal barriers to the movement of goods, services, capital, and people, and it has rendered violent conflict among its members unimaginable. That is enough. Europe's demographic and cultural survival is in doubt, and that survival is possible only if her historic nations reassert their identity and rediscover their Faith. The defeated E.U. constitution would have made both of those goals unattainable. Its consignment to the dust bin of history is good news to all true Europeans and their American cousins.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

OBITER DICTA: Wayne Allensworth's and Aaron D. Wolf's *Views* were adapted from speeches delivered at the November 2004 meeting of **The John Randolph Club** at the Menger Hotel, in the shadow of the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas. Be sure to mark your calendar today for the 16th Annual Meeting, which will be held in beautiful and historic **Charleston, South Carolina**. Please see the ad on page 5 for more information.

Our first poet this month is **David Middleton**. Dr. Middleton, the poet-in-residence at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana, is poetry editor for the *Classical Outlook* (University of Georgia) and the *Anglican Theological Review*. His books of verse include *The Burning Fields* (1991) and *Beyond the Chandeleurs* (1999), both from LSU Press.

Our second poet is **Leo Yankevich**. Born in western Pennsylvania in 1961, Mr. Yankevich lives with his wife and three sons in Gliwice, Poland. His poems and translations have appeared in *Blue Unicorn*, *Cedar Hill Review*, *Edge City Review*, *Envoi*, *Iambs & Trochees*, the *MacGuffin*, *Poetry Nottingham*, *Staple*, the *Tennessee Review*, and the *Windsor Review*.

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by Thomas Fleming

Heroes in the Age of the Antihero

We Americans are in a serious quandary. Our national mythology—like the mythologies of most nations—requires us to pay tribute to the heroes of the past. Once upon a time, Fourth of July speeches routinely invoked the bravery of George Washington and his men, their sufferings at Valley Forge, and their surprise crossing of the Delaware. We admired the brilliance and gallantry of Lee, the steadfastness of Grant, the reckless fortitude of Custer, the toughness of commanders such as Black Jack Pershing or George Patton, the personal bravery of Alvin York and Audie Murphy. And if Grant was an alcoholic butcher and Custer, an incompetent war criminal, we preferred to ignore their shortcomings, remembering that Grant was cool under fire and that Custer died gamey.

And then came Vietnam, and images of Alvin York and Audie Murphy were replaced by those of Lt. William Calley and the My Lai massacre. But long before My Lai and the so-called Vietnam syndrome of cynicism and dishonor, Americans were already being trained to prefer existentialist antiheroes to the red-blooded Marines who stormed the shores of Tripoli. Even before Sartre's repellent self-portrait as Mathieu (in *L'age de raison*) and Camus' *Stranger*, there was Bogart on film and the English poets who were understandably demoralized by the horror of the trenches in World War I. Poets often have the best sense of smell, and it is a terrible truth that most good English and American poets of the 20th century either hated war or saw it, at best, as an ugly necessity. Their truth was turned into propaganda by lesser men.

When Lieutenant Calley went berserk in 1968, an entire generation of American college students had been cutting their cynical eyeteeth on Saul Bellow's *Dangling Man*, J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, John Barth's *End of the Road*, Vance Bourjaily's *Confessions of a Spent Youth*, Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Richard Farina's *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up*, and, perhaps most significantly, Joseph Heller's *Catch 22*.

None of these books entirely lacks literary merit, and none of the authors necessarily intended to promote the effeminate and sneering contempt for heroism and virtue that Paul Newman would exemplify on the screen. However responsible they may be for shaping the mentality of their times, poets and novelists are as much the victims of their times as the rest of us.

The antihero has been with us a long time. Since the American War Between the States, most sane and humane people have recognized that war under modern conditions is less likely to breed heroic and chivalrous soldiers than to induce selfishness and despair among the men "who die as cattle." I have known a number of combat veterans who fought hard and endured much, but few of them had the old soldier's taste for spinning tales about their exploits. At Fredericksburg, General Lee told Longstreet that "it is well that war is so terrible—we should grow too fond of it," but war was to become even more terrible without diminishing the appetite for war in the men who rule democracies. Our quandary, then, is that good Americans know that our tradition requires heroism of its men, but we also know that our instinct for courage has been too often manipulated by ambitious politicians without the shadow of a justification for their endless wars.

The War Between the States inspired the first little wave of cynicism. Although Southerners honored their heroes of the war and, throughout the Midwest, even such scoundrels as Illinois' Black Jack Logan, founder of the Grand Army of the Republic, were revered as great men, Northeasterners were more ambiguous. The progressive muckraker Stephen Crane (from Newark) set the stage. Crane's first novel was a sympathetic account of a "girl of the streets," and he went on to describe the horrors of a war that had ended before he was born. Crane was among the first realists in American literature, a genuine American original, who borrowed his ideas from Zola.

New England's educated classes—who had, by and large, stayed safely out of the war—grew quickly tired of celebrating the martial virtues they actually despised. Henry Adams, whose Southern grandmother and college friendships with Virginians made him a man of confused loyalties, decided to "break glass" by attacking the memory of Virginia's first cavalier, Capt. John Smith. The attack was so effective that it was not until the late 1950's that the process of rehabilitation was undertaken.

The most controversial point in Smith's career was not the romantic episode with Pocahontas but his exploits fighting the Turks, which he described in his autobiography. Smith was not a learned man—and the English have never been good at pronouncing, much less spelling, foreign names—and his account was peppered with names of places and people that seemed invented until Laura Polanyi Striker, with her knowledge of Hungarian, was able to demonstrate that the description he gives of his travels and battles, however highly colored, is substantially accurate.

Smith had had an amazing career even before joining the Jamestown expedition. Born in 1580 to a mildly prosperous yeoman family in Lincolnshire, he was, from early on, determined to be an adventurer. He tried (and failed) to run off to sea, but, after his father's death, he joined Capt. Joseph Duxbury, who was fighting the Spanish in the Low Countries. Back in England, he began reading books on the military arts and was fortunate in gaining permission to improve his riding skills under the tutelage of the earl of Lincoln's riding master, Theodore Pologa, an Italian who claimed descent from the Palaeologus family that had ruled the Byzantine empire. It was probably from Pologa that the 20-year-old Smith conceived the fantastic idea of going east to fight the Turks.

Along the way, he was robbed by French traveling companions, but he eventually arrived in Rome, where the Protestant Smith had a meeting with Robert Parsons, S.J., the foremost English Catholic conspirator against Queen Elizabeth. Parsons apparently arranged for his countryman to meet an Irish priest and an English Catholic in Graz, and, through these contacts, he signed up to fight under the banner of a Count Modrusch (Smith calls him Earl Meldritch), a scion of a

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noble Croatian family, the Frankopans. (I wish I had known this a few years ago when I spent some days in Zagreb with Count Louis Frankopan and his wife and son.) On this long campaign in Hungary and Rumania, Smith would fight alongside imperial subjects from the Balkans: Croats, Slovenes, and, undoubtedly, Serbs, who enlisted in large numbers in Habsburg armies.

Smith was a doughty fighter, and, what is more, he had studied what military manuals he could put his hands on. His study of pyrotechnics enabled him to suggest a means of slinging explosive fireballs into a besieged city and using fireworks to frighten opposing cavalry. His most famous exploit, however, took place in Transylvania, where the emperor was locked in a complex struggle with both Turks and Sigismund Bathory, to whom Modrusch had offered his services. Yes, only 65 years after their disastrous defeat at Mohacs, the Hungarians and Rumanians still could not stay united against their common enemy.

At the siege of a town still hard to identify, a Turkish officer, bored with the siege, offered to do single combat with any of the enemy. The boldest of the Christians put their names in a pot, and Smith was lucky enough to have his name drawn. In the first encounter, Smith ran his lance through the faceplate of the Turk's helmet, killed him, and took his head. One of the victim's enraged friends challenged Smith, who made short work of him the next day, shooting him off his horse and, once again, taking the head. A third and most formidable challenger, "Bonny Mulgro," struck Smith so hard that he dropped his battle-ax, but, coming in for the kill, the bold Turk found himself outmaneuvered by Smith's accomplished horsemanship (the last revenge of the Palaeologi) and, run through the breast by the Englishman's trusty falchion, lost his head.

Smith was rewarded handsomely for his heroism, receiving not only an annual pension of 300 ducats from Sigismund but a gentleman's coat of arms from Count Modrusch: three Turk's heads. Fighting under Modrusch, Smith had enjoyed a great run of luck, but their luck soon ran out, and, outnumbered by a great force of Tartars fighting for the emperor against Sigismund Bathory, most of the Christians were killed in battle. Modrusch and a few others escaped, but the wounded Smith was taken prisoner, nursed back to health, and sold into slavery. He was eventually sent to a young Greek woman in Constantinople as a present from her Turkish admirer, who claimed to have captured this Bohemian nobleman in battle. Through intermediaries, the girl learned the truth, and, feeling pity (or something more), she sent her English slave to learn the Turkish language and manners from her brother, a *timariot* (holder of a military fief), who was managing some vast estates on the Don River, northeast of the Sea of Azov.

The brother apparently realized that his sister's regard for Smith was dangerous to his own interests, made him a slave of slaves, and sent him to work in the fields. Not satisfied with his cruelty, the brother rode out to the fields, found the Englishman, and beat him with a threshing bat. Smith, who could stand no more, killed his master with that very bat, took his clothes and horse, and rode out into the wilderness.

Captain Smith did not have the faintest idea where he was, and, looking at a map back in England, he could only guess. He wandered aimlessly until he found a caravan trail that led from Poland to the Orient. A sign marker showed a crescent and a cross (indicating Russia), and he wisely followed the cross until he was taken in, along the way, by a series of Russians, who helped him on his journey to the Habsburg empire. "In all [my] life," he declared, "[I] seldom met with more respect, mirth, content, and entertainment," especially from the local governors, who (as Smith understood) realized that they were themselves "subject to like calamity."

Smith did not return to England but went off in search of more trouble. He ended up taking service with a French sea captain whose trade was remarkably close to piracy. Battered mercilessly by Spanish warships, Smith and his French comrades held out and actually saved what was left of the ship, but it was a defeated and disgruntled Smith who made his way back to England. At the age of 24, however, the adventurer was not ready for a quiet life. Within a few years, he found himself involved in the Virginia Company's expedition to the New World. His know-it-all demeanor on the voyage so enraged the leaders that they made him their prisoner. But, when they opened their sealed instructions, they were astonished to discover that Smith was to be a member of the Council of Virginia.

How John Smith saved the Jamestown colony from its follies—trusting and yet antagonizing the Indians and establishing a system of communism designed to produce sloth and famine—only to be nearly murdered by his rivals is a story that is (or ought to be) known to every American, who can read it either in Smith's own words or in such excellent books as Phillip Barbour's *The Three Worlds of Captain John Smith* (which I reread to refresh my failing memory).

Americans can draw many lessons from the career of their first hero. Ours is not merely a nation of ne'er-do-wells and religious fanatics, a "propositional nation," or an experiment for human transcendence. The first American colonists were bold adventurers whose courage has been denigrated too long by the self-hating ex-Puritans of the northeast. Strangest of all, perhaps, is the story of how the founder of Anglican Virginia, the exemplar of all true American heroes, went east under the direction of an English Jesuit, fought in a great crusade against the Ottoman Empire, and bore a coat of arms granted by a Hungarian Croat Catholic in honor of his exploits against the Muslims. Americans who would be truly American will understand that our struggle today is Smith's struggle 400 years ago, when he fought to keep the Turk from overrunning Europe. c

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Of Local History
by David Middleton

Given to recollection as he sighs,
His trembling fingers hold a trembling pen
Inking a page in purple once again
With bold notations made by half-blind eyes.

The yellowed registers of death and birth
In courthouse, church, newspapers, and the minds
Of those whose memories seek what memory finds,
Pure fact and what pure hearts say fact is worth:

The leaning columns tallied up by hand
In ledgers resting under lock and key,
Each founding family's branching Bible tree
Whose leaves grow green above a Promised Land:

These yield the sheer particulars that blend
Quintessence with an essence theirs alone,
Dialect etched on universal stone,
Hard parleys of beginnings and their end.

The Queen of Heaven in our local rose,
A patriarch in tintype rebel grays
Sober as Jehovah, the pressed bouquets
In yearbooks for the beaus that no one knows:

The human heart's old story made of dust
God's chronicler sifts through in passed-on tales
Whose shapings and reshapings mark the pales
Around our unbound commons as they must:

Such rare and kindred instances extol
The uncontrolled remainder of a reign
Still His alone whose nature can sustain
A world wherein each thing declares the whole.

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by Paul Gottfried

The Ugly Muslims

Russell Berman, the Walter A. Haas Professor of Humanities at Stanford, has published a book, *Anti-Americanism in Europe*, that focuses on European dislike for the United States. Berman explains that "anti-Americanism has emerged as an ideology available to form a postnational European identity."

> In place of the nationalist, anti-immigration mood of the 1990s, anti-Americanism permits a generalized European hostility toward the paradigmatic nation of immigrants. Europeans can therefore indulge in xenophobia without nationalism.

Although there is much in these statements that I would dispute, Berman does call attention to a truly bizarre situation.

While France, Germany, Sweden, and the Lowlands are denouncing America as an imperialist threat, these countries are doing everything humanly possible to accommodate a growing and indigestible Muslim presence. In France alone, over five million residents (nine percent of the population) are Turkish and African Muslims. If current immigration patterns persist, that figure will soar to 10 million, or about 15 percent of the population, by 2030. By then, Third World Muslims who have moved to France will account for over 40 percent of the annual birthrate. An E.U. estimate, perhaps intended to quell anxiety, claims that another 300,000 Muslims have clandestinely arrived in France since 1981. This particular figure may understate what it reports. The figure that is available from the same estimates for clandestines in the United Kingdom is over 300,000 but is less than one third of the number that is circulating in Germany. According to the E.U. Commission, over half a million illegal immigrants, who are overwhelmingly Muslim, enter E.U. territory each year, while attempts to intercept and return them have been minimal.

The Turks in Germany (which now has a Muslim population of almost six million) have pressured the two party blocs to secure Turkish admission to the European Union. In France, Muslims have done exactly the same thing. Turkey's admission, which now seems likely, despite her Islamic government and low standard of living relative to Western Europe, will precipitate a further demographic shift. It will likely lead to millions of poorly educated Turks, particularly from backward Anatolia, being thrust into the heart of Europe as a mobile workforce.

In just about every European country where they have gone, these immigrants have created social problems, taxed welfare systems, and responded to anti-Christian and anti-Jewish rabble-rousing. Maurice Allais, the French Nobel laureate in economics in 1988, has determined that the integration of a single immigrant worker requires a European country to spend four times in social services what a native worker receives as an annual salary. If the immigrant brings along a wife and children, costs may rise to 20 times the annual salary of an indigenous French worker.

By now, the horror stories are tiresome even if true, and one is reminded of the ancient aphorism "*Deus vult perdere prius dementat*" (The gods drive mad those they intend to destroy). While European leaders go on about the dangers of American unilateralism, they do nothing to restore a European character to their countries.

Berman observes that the E.U. vision is postnational and based on supranational bureaucratic regulation. It also leaves no place for the nation-states that the European Union is replacing. Supranational E.U. directives allow bureaucrats and judges to accommodate accredited victims by stripping majority European populations of their constitutional freedoms. Instead of addressing their demographic problems and trying to control their borders, Europeans make it a hate crime even to notice the reasons for social disruption. At this moment, France and Germany have both launched new initiatives against intolerance, and it was possible to read the cover story about xenophobia in *Le Monde Hebdomaire* in early March without realizing that French antisemitism is a Muslim problem.

On February 1, the French minister of state, who introduced "positive discrimination" in public employment and university admissions for Third World settlers in France, vowed to take new measures to "finish up with anti-Semitism." According to his department, however, the "extreme Right" in France, a term designating French Christian opponents of Third World immigration, accounts for less than seven percent of antisemitic acts in the country. The president of the "extreme right-wing" organization Les Identitaires is correct to observe that the planned campaign against hate speech will likely be directed against politically incorrect nationalists, to help the Chirac government court leftist and Muslim support.

The tendency of French Jewish spokesmen to complain about "anti-Semitism creeping back into France" fosters a certain self-deception. The anarchist Proudhon may have disliked Jews and shared this prejudice with the Enlightenment figure Voltaire. The expressed dislike for Jews among long-dead French reformers, however, has nothing to do with the present threat. European countries, in a fit of multicultural madness, have turned themselves over to embattled Muslims, who form sizable voting blocs in some places. And these Muslims are generally hostile to the Jews because of Jewish identification with the "Zionist entity."

One might wonder what exactly the French government can do at this point to neutralize France's Islamic-xenophile lobby. Whatever that might be, French president Jacques Chirac is not bothering to think about it. He is too busy assuring critics, including Ariel Sharon, that "anti-Semitism existed in France before the Muslims came here."

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Guys of the Golden West

A Glorious Sunset

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

During the first half of the second-to-last decade of the 19th century, three young gentlemen traveled from their native region of the northeastern United States to the trans-Mississippi West, still a few years short in those days of the official closing of the American frontier. Though alike in being Ivy Leaguers, well-born, well-bred, and well-heeled, the three were otherwise dissimilar in background and training, as well as in character and temperament. The eldest (though only by a year), born at Oyster Bay, New York, and educated at Harvard College, having published an ornithological work and a history of the War of 1812, had already made up his mind on a political career when he entrained for the Dakota Territory in 1883 for health reasons—and in hope of shooting a buffalo "while there were still buffalo left to shoot."

The second in age was a Philadelphia patrician, descended on his mother's side from Pierce Butler of South Carolina and Fanny Kemble, the renowned Shakespearean actress, whose aspirations to a career as an operatic composer had resulted in his meeting Richard Wagner at Bayreuth and, in Wagner's house, Franz Liszt (who, after listening to an original composition by the young man had complimented him on a *"talent prononcé"*) before his return to Philadelphia to take a job with the Union Safe Deposit Vaults. A graduate of Harvard (and later of Harvard Law School), he was a close friend of the Oyster Bay man, whose enthusiastic tales of Western life influenced him in his decision to spend the summer of 1885 in Wyoming, for reasons of his own health.

The third youth, less distinguished socially and hailing from the modest town of Canton in upstate New York but a Yale graduate all the same, was a year younger yet. A former forward on the Yale football team who had studied art in college, he went west in 1881 for the explicit reason of "becoming a millionaire" and, thus, eligible for the hand of the young lady in Ogdensburg, New York, already refused him by her father. The names of these three young gentlemen were Theodore Roosevelt, Owen Wister, and Frederick Remington.

What each discovered in the West differed according to his temperament and intellect. In the case of two, the direct experience of the Western frontier provided a sense of vocation; for the third, it served to distinguish between vocation and avocation, while developing the physical and mental strength demanded by a career in politics whose aim, even at so early a date, was the White House. Inevitably, according to their natures, each of the three men entertained a differing vision of the future of the American West, as well as of its past. What they shared in experience was a vital apprehension of the West as it presented itself to their exuberant youth, the embodied manifestation of the clean bedrock reality—unsentimental, unsparing, and irresistible—upon which human existence rests, even as they understood, with regretful pangs, that the reality they knew was already on the wane and would perhaps be gone as soon as tomorrow, or the day after. What they won by experience was also a shared achievement. This was nothing less than manhood, a fact that all three—Roosevelt, Wister, and Remington—appear to have recognized intuitively.

Perhaps realizing, early in adulthood, one's childhood dreams is the most direct and best route to developed maturity. Then again, perhaps it is not—in the Land of Opportunity especially, where getting what they want before the age of 30 may be the most efficient means of depriving so many Americans of their lives' second acts, as Scott Fitzgerald suggested. What is notable in the instance of Remington, Wister, and Roosevelt is that they seem to have had no previous idea, entertained no preconceived ideal, of the reality that, in its taking hold of them and their taking hold of it, received them as youths and sent them forth as men. Remington's initial inspiration was the prospect of making millions—that, and the example of his father's service as a soldier in the War Between the States. Roosevelt wanted to shoot a buffalo. And Wister wanted to escape his bank; later, Harvard Law School; and, later still, the practice of law. In each case, the ideal was to follow later: manly endurance, fortitude, and physical competence (Roosevelt); Anglo-Saxon chivalry (Wister); and "the subject," explored, set down, and preserved by the recording of "facts" selected from the endlessly unfolding "panorama" of the life of the American West (Remington).

In due time, their three separate (though substantially overlapping) ideals did materialize—but on location, not at a distance and *in absentia*. The following passages give an impression of the nature and quality of these. From Remington:

> Evening overtook me one night in Montana and I by good luck made the campfire of an old wagon freighter who shared his bacon and coffee with me. I was 19 years of age and he was a very old man. Over the pipes it developed that he was born in western New York and had gone West at an early age. His West was Iowa. Thence during his long life he had followed the receding frontiers, always further and further West. . . .
>
> I knew the railroad was coming. I saw men already swarming into the land. . . . I knew the wild riders and the vacant land were about to vanish forever—and the more I considered the subject, the bigger the *forever* loomed.

From Wister:

> I can't possibly say how extraordinary and beautiful the

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valleys we've been going through are. They're different from all things I've seen. When you go for miles through the piled rocks where the fire has risen straight out of the crevices, you never see a human being—only now and then some disappearing wild animal. It's like what scenery on the moon must be. Then suddenly you come round a turn and down into a green cut where there are horsemen and wagons and hundreds of cattle, and then it's like Genesis. Just across this corduroy bridge are a crowd of cowboys round a fire, with their horses tethered.

And from Roosevelt:

When the days have dwindled to their shortest, and the nights seem never-ending, then all the great northern plains are changed into an abode of iron desolation. Sometimes furious gales blow out of the north, driving before them the clouds of blinding snowdust, wrapping the mantle of death round every unsheltered being that faces their unshackled anger. They roar in a thunderous bass as they sweep across the prairie or whirl through the naked cañons; they shiver the great brittle cottonwoods, and beneath their rough touch the icy limbs of the pines that cluster in the gorges sing like the chords of an Aeolian harp. . . . All the land is like granite; the great rivers stand still in their beds, as if turned to frosted steel. In the long nights there is no sound to break the lifeless silence. Under the ceaseless, shifting play of the Northern Lights, or lighted only by the wintry brilliance of the stars, the snow-clad plains stretch out into dead and endless wastes of glimmering white.

Then the great fire-place of the ranch house is choked with blazing logs, and at night we have to sleep under so many blankets that the weight is fairly oppressive.

Ideals, derived as they are from the moral imagination, are not mere abstractions; nor are they entirely detached from the chronological and social contexts in which they were formed, and which partly formed them. Roosevelt, Wister, and Remington: All three, as old-line Americans, were, to a greater or lesser degree, and in their different ways, dismayed by the direction their country was taking and the shape it was assuming. After meeting Remington for the first time in the lodge at Geyser Basin in Yellowstone Park, Wister rejoiced at having found a kindred spirit (one who, by great good fortune, was already signed on as his collaborator):

Remington is an excellent American; that means, he thinks as I do about the disgrace of our politics and the present asphyxiation of all real love of country. He used almost the same words that have of late been in my head, that this continent does not hold a nation any longer but is merely a strip of land on which a crowd is struggling for riches.

By coincidence, not many days before making the artist's acquaintance, the novelist-to-be had written that he saw no escape from the saturnalia of American politics: "Our country and its government are now two separate things, not greatly unlike a carcass and a vulture." This fate, which Wister noted had befallen great nations before in history, entailed its own remedy, which was simply the caving in of all business credit and a collapse of the trust that makes credit available. "I hope this earthquake will come as soon as possible . . . for this is our only hope. No preaching or protest, no honest young men entering politics are going to be of the slightest avail now." To most of Remington's and Wister's assessment, the young Roosevelt would doubtless have assented—the final sentence excepted. "I intended," he wrote later (but not much later), "to be one of the governing class." *He* was a young man already entered in politics, and he intended to be very much of avail in charting a new course for the burgeoning American nation.

Melanie Anderson

Three differing viewpoints on broader matters resulted in three equally differing attitudes with regard to the future of the American West (and, ultimately, of America herself). Remington's reaction to the fact of historical ephemerality was a *carpe diem* response: Get as much of it down—on paper, in paint, and in bronze—as possible in a single lifetime (which, in his case, was only 48 years). For Remington, technique was his subject, as well as the means of rendering it: Skill, competence, agility, and "grace under pressure," on the part of brute creatures as well as of men and women, are really what his work records and celebrates, rather than the West itself. (Critics have observed that the drawings and paintings leave the natural background vague or nonexistent, quite unlike those of Remington's equally great contemporary, C.M. Russell.)

Wister's response was more complex. His famous postprandial declaration, made at the Philadelphia Club in 1891 after a return from a Western sojourn, of his intent to become the Kipling who would save "the sage-brush for American literature," was actually preceded by the more intellectual, writerly reaction. "I feel more certainly than ever," he had written in his journal on that first trip to Wyoming, "that no matter how completely the East may be the headwaters from which the West has flown and is flowing, it won't be a century before the West is simply the true America, with thought, type, and life of its own kind." Two entries later, he qualifies his seeming enthusiasm by adding, "it will slowly make room for Cheyennes, Chicagos, and ultimately inland New Yorks—everything reduced to the same flat prairie-like level of utilitarian civilizations. Branans and Beeches [*i.e.*, ranchers and homesteaders] will give way to Tweeds and Jay Goulds—and the ticker will replace the rifle." In the case of Roosevelt, however, we find a more equivocal note in his contemplation (in *Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail*) of the passage of time, change, and the

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unfolding of history:

> In its present form stock-raising on the plains is doomed, and can hardly outlast the century. The great free ranches, with their barbarous, picturesque, and curiously fascinating surroundings, mark a primitive stage of existence as surely as do the great tracts of primeval forests, and like the latter must pass away before the onward march of our people; and we who have felt the charm of the life, and have exulted in its abounding vigor and its bold, restless freedom, will not only regret its passing for our own sakes, but must also feel real sorrow that those who come after us are not to see, as we have seen, what is perhaps the pleasantest, healthiest, and most exciting phase of American existence.

Roosevelt, Wister, and Remington responded with equal passion, engagement, and imagination to the Western frontier, which all three saw as a Beginning, in the sense of a primeval basis, though only one of them recognized it as the End that would form the basis of a New Beginning.

The man of affairs who already half-expected to get himself elected president of the United States was able to accept, with equanimity, the passing of the West with which he had fallen in love. As for the man of letters and the artist (a talented writer himself), the two found historical bottom in the notion of the American cowboy as an unchanged and unchanging type, once Remington had succeeded in diverting Wister from his evolutionist theories regarding the West in process of becoming the "true America." As Wister put it in his essay "The Evolution of the Cow-Puncher," "in personal daring and in skill as to the horse, the knight and the cowboy are nothing but the same Saxon of different environments"—as were the Hawkinses, Boones, and Greys—"always the same Saxons, ploughing the seas and carving the forests in every shape of man, from preacher to thief, and in each shape changelessly unchanged." (That his "evolution" was actually evolution's antithesis seems not to have occurred to Wister: Evolution was the idea that had set off his theorizing about the West, and so it was "evolution" he acknowledged in his title.)

Roosevelt, Wister, and Remington responded with equal passion, engagement, and imagination to the Western frontier, which all three saw as a Beginning, in the sense of a primeval basis (Roosevelt, like Wister, compares the landscape of the West to that of Genesis), though only one of them recognized it as the End that would form the basis of a New Beginning. In so responding, they became, in equal measure, men. But there was something more as well, since their manliness developed in conformity with a distinct *type* of man: man as the West had made him, and as it *might* make American men in the future, provided they succeeded in combining the strenuousness of T.R. with the artistic vision of Frederick Remington and the chivalric code of Owen Wister. The great question was, Could the desired ideal be sufficiently realized, given the human material at hand in America at the turn of the 20th century? Of the three, only The Man Who Would Be President seems to have believed there was so much as a remote possibility of the thing being accomplished at all.

As early as 1894, in his essay "Americanism" (in *Forum*), Theodore Roosevelt derogated "that flaccid habit of . . . cosmopolitanism" at the expense of a distinctive American type forged from "Americanized" immigrants and Old Americans who had refused the temptation to throw their birthright away. A year later, the historical pessimist Owen Wister lamented (in "The Evolution of the Cowboy") that "No rood of modern ground is more debased and mongrel with its hordes of encroaching alien vermin, that turn our cities to Babels and our citizenship to a hybrid farce, who degrade our commonwealth from a nation into something half pawn-shop, half broker's office." For most of the 20th century's first decade, Roosevelt was ensconced in the White House behind his bully pulpit, striving lustily to Americanize America in accordance with his vision. Frederick Remington died prematurely in 1908. Even before 1914, Wister, under the influence of his friend John Jay Chapman, became, in John Lukacs's description, "a racist of sorts," "brood[ing] endlessly about how immigration was destroying the nation." Where Roosevelt advocated Americanization, Wister wanted Restrictionism. Neither solution worked in the end, chiefly, perhaps, for a reason Roosevelt had put his finger on in *Ranch Life and the Hunting-Trail*:

> To appreciate finally his fine, manly qualities, the wild rough-rider of the plains should be seen in his own home. There he passes his days, there he does his life-work, there, when he meets death, he faces it as he has faced many other evils, with quiet, uncomplaining fortitude. Brave, hospitable, hardy, and adventurous, he is the grim pioneer of our race; he prepares the way for the civilization before whose face he must disappear. Hard and dangerous though his existence is, it has yet a wild attraction that strongly draws to it his bold, free spirit. He lives in the lonely lands where mighty rivers twist in long reaches between the barren bluffs; where the prairies stretch out into billowy plains of waving grass, girt only by the blue horizon,—plains across whose endless breadth he can steer his course for days and weeks and see neither man to speak to nor hill to break the level; where the glory and the burning splendor of the sunsets kindle the blue vault of heaven and the level brown earth till they merge together in an ocean of flaming fire.

In order to be appreciated—and, thus, emulated—the prototypical Westerner needed to be viewed in the context of his own pristine habitat. And what had become, by the end of the frontier century, of that habitat? On this matter, Roosevelt, Wister, and Remington all could have agreed. The entire business may be as simple as that. ·c·

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A Place to Stand

Texas and the Making of Men and Heroes

by Wayne Allensworth

Melanie Anderson

The names are legendary; the tales of heroism, a part of our heritage as Texans and Americans. Houston, Crockett, Bowie, Travis: All, save William Barret Travis, were nationally known figures before they came to Texas, which was then considered Mexican territory. Sam Houston had been governor of Tennessee, a protégé of Andrew Jackson, a war hero, and a potential presidential candidate. David Crockett had been a congressman, a popular hero, and perhaps America's first media celebrity. James Bowie's reputation as a fighting man spread his fame on the violent frontier.

But like the much-younger Travis, Houston, Crockett, and Bowie came to Texas to make a fresh start, to realize big dreams, to become the men they wanted to be. And all came initially as failures, each with a sense of a destiny that had gone unfulfilled.

They were not alone. Texas has long been a place that generates myths. From the very beginning of America's engagement with Texas, the land itself sparked the American imagination. "Texas fever" swept through America in the 1820's and 1830's, as *empresarios* such as Stephen F. Austin opened Texas to American settlement. Americans headed for the border, scrawling "G.T.T." on the doors of their abandoned cabins. They were "Gone To Texas," gone to settle a new land and make a new life. Settler Micajah Autry, for instance, would write to his wife Martha, "I am determined to provide for you a home or perish."

As Walter Lord wrote, the land that met the settlers was an

> eye-opening, a breath-taking sight. . . . the sheer abundance of everything staggered the imagination. No drought or falling water table had yet taken its toll. The prairie was an endless sea of waving grass and wild flowers . . . The fresh green river bottoms were thick with bee trees, all dripping honey. Deep, limpid pools lay covered with lilies. The streams were full of fish, and game was everywhere . . . there for the taking. . . . It was enough to give birth to a Texas penchant for superlatives that was destined to endure. Travelers described sugar cane that grew twenty-five feet high in a single season . . . [and] pumpkins as large as a man could lift.

The Texas legend and the Texas identity, as so often happens, were forged in the age-old pattern of migration and war. Micajah Autry did make that home in Texas but perished securing it at the Alamo in a struggle that laid the foundation of a distinct Texan identity. Texas became the Lone Star of the West, an independent republic founded by heroes, storytellers, and rogues; forged by courage, determination, folly, and tragedy; defined by the tall tale and the tall men who made them. Texas became a maker of men and heroes.

Sam Houston was one of the fathers of the Lone Star Republic, leaving behind a life among the Cherokee, an apparently ruined political career, and a reputation as a warrior, boozer, and brawler. His first marriage ended in scandal, Houston's young wife having left her husband after only 11 weeks. Houston never revealed the source of the conflict but departed Tennessee and the governor's post—as well as a fair prospect of becoming a presidential candidate—to live among the Cherokee before leaving for Texas.

The rest, as they say, is history. Sam Houston won independence for Texas and a place in the Texas pantheon of heroes. At San Jacinto, Houston was wounded and had his horse, Saracen, shot out from under him. Twice the president of the Republic of Texas, a congressman, governor, senator, and revered hero, Houston was surely one of the most remarkable men in a remarkable American Golden Age. Before the Battle of San

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Jacinto, one of the pivotal clashes in American history, Houston told his troops to "Be men! Be free men, that your children may bless their father's name." On his deathbed, "Texas" was among the last words he uttered before passing into eternity.

David Crockett, who preferred not to be called "Davy," had also left behind a political career when he came to Texas. Crockett the politician had mastered the style of the frontier tall tale, creating his mythical alter ego "Davy" as a larger-than-life figure in a tradition that produced Paul Bunyan, Mike Fink, Pecos Bill, and the protagonists of many a dime novel. Davy Crockett could grin a bear to death or ride a cyclone. The tall-tale tradition suited Crockett, who found his political support as a congressman among the hunter/squatters of West Tennessee.

Texas meant liberty, independence, and a fresh start for the men who were made legends there. We have those legends left to inspire us today, but, as I write these words, I feel a pang of sorrow. How will our sons become men in the bureaucratized, risk-averse, feminist post-America our elites envision for us?

A principled, if somewhat naive, man, Crockett broke with Andrew Jackson's political machine and soon found himself out of a job, in debt, and looking for new prospects. So Crockett was soon "Gone To Texas," leaving behind his family and the promise of a political career that was not to be. He asked his family not to worry: "I'm with my friends," he wrote.

Crockett volunteered to defend the Alamo as a "high private." His fiddle, courage, and good humor rallied the weary defenders. It is interesting to speculate what would have become of the Crockett legend had he not gone to Texas. Perhaps the popular hero of Jacksonian America would be largely forgotten if not for his death at the Alamo. Without Crockett's decision to serve on the walls of the old mission, there would likely have been no "Davy" for the 20th and 21st centuries.

James Bowie also succeeded in creating a legend for himself. Having failed to secure the fortune and status as a man of property that he seems desperately to have wanted, he became involved in land-grant forgery schemes that damaged his reputation. In Texas, Bowie lost his beloved wife and family to a cholera epidemic, adding tragedy to his lack of financial security. Bowie was an adventurer and a man of action who saw Texas as one more chance to secure his desired station in life. His decision to stay at the Alamo assured him his place in history, securing for him a status in death that had eluded him in life.

Bowie's connection to the Alamo legend ensured that his memory would not fade away. As a frontier brawler, then hero of the Texas War for Independence, Bowie provided a prototype for the gunfighter legends that would follow as the six-gun replaced the bowie knife as the weapon of the frontier duelist. And the Bowie of frontier legend was not all that different from the James Bowie of life: "fearless, quick to fight, yet a defender of the weak."

William Barret Travis, who became commander of the Alamo garrison when Bowie fell ill during the siege, was, like Bowie, a complex figure. A young man in his mid-20's at the time of the Texas Revolution, he did not enjoy the fame, political connections, or winning personality of Bowie, Houston, and Crockett. Texas streets and counties bear his name, but it is safe to say that he is the least-remembered, and least-beloved, of the Alamo heroes. Yet the Texas Revolution was the key to the making of both Travis the man and Travis the hero.

The road to a new life in Texas and immortality at the Alamo had not been a straight one for young Travis. A few years before, he had left Alabama a failure. Travis fled mounting debts, a failing marriage, and the collapse of his plans to become a respected man of influence. He had abandoned his wife and children, making a pledge to return once he had made his fortune in Texas (a pledge he never honored). Travis had the impulsive quality of a bright man with prospects who lacked sufficient maturity and judgment to see those prospects realized. He was brusque and prickly, not a man most people readily took a liking to. Yet he could be kind, even charitable, was religious, if not especially pious, and, as William C. Davis, author of a triple biography of Travis, Bowie, and Crockett, wrote, "More than once he sat up through the night with a sick and dying friend."

Travis was born in 1809. Within a few years, his family had moved to the frontier territory of Alabama. Young Travis's father saw to it that William would be equipped to better himself. He attended schools where he was tutored in Greek, Latin, French, rhetoric, history, and mathematics, finishing his formal schooling at 18, when he left home to read law in Claiborne, Alabama.

In Travis's 1828 marriage to 16-year-old Rosanna Cato, we see another side of his character. A severe young man, so conscious of proper behavior and dress, Travis had a streak of the adventurer in him, a taste for chance, women, and horses—and he saw himself as a man of destiny, even beginning an autobiography as a 20-something immigrant to Texas. Though polished (by frontier standards) and a bit priggish, Travis was also impulsive: He liked to gamble and was equipped with a robust libido that sometimes got him into trouble.

Travis's marriage to Rosanna was apparently a stormy one, probably hurried along by a pregnancy. They would eventually have a daughter and a son. Travis was busy, publishing a newspaper and studying law, as well as holding a commission in the local militia. Lacking maturity and judgment, he soon found himself drowning in a sea of debt.

Rosanna was apparently a harsh spouse, and she might even have sought comfort in the arms of another man—or Travis, at least, may have thought so. After being sued over his debts and

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following the eruption of a full-blown "feud," as he called it, with Rosanna, Travis headed for Texas. Depressed and disappointed in himself, his marriage, and his career, he wanted a fresh start.

In 1831, however, Travis was not yet a complete man. A sense of responsibility would gradually develop in the young lawyer who became a leading member of the so-called War Party, which saw Mexican leader Santa Ana for what he was: no federalist who would support Texas autonomy, as many had initially believed, but a centralist dictator.

By 1835, Travis was a prosperous and respected lawyer and community leader. His prospects for advancement appeared limitless. After a relatively amicable parting with Rosanna (time having apparently healed some of the wounds both had acquired in their unhappy marriage), he brought his son, Charles, to stay with him in Texas. Travis began planning for the future, courting Rebecca Cummings in order to give Charles a secure home. The Texas Revolution intervened, however.

It is a measure of Travis's growing maturity that so young a man could hold together the Alamo garrison and organize the mission/fortress's defenses in the fateful month of February 1836. T.R. Fehrenbach, a native son who has captured the spirit of the early Texans far better than any other, has written that the revolutionary firebrand "was one of those most fortunate of men," for, "on the grim stone walls of the Alamo," "Buck" Travis had "found his time and place."

Inside the Alamo, Travis was thinking of his son as his appointment with destiny approached. "Take care of my little boy," he wrote to his friend David Ayers, who was looking after Charles. "If the country should be saved, I may make him a splendid fortune; but if the country should be lost and I should perish, he will have nothing but the proud recollection that he is the son of a man who died for his country."

In a letter to his friend Jesse Grimes, Travis stated, in the words of historian Walter Lord, "why he was making his stand." Travis remained at the Alamo for reasons of strategy, because of a bond among the defenders, and because of a "fierce desire to defend the new homes that dotted the land." There was something else, however: Lord sensed in Travis the conviction that "a man should be willing to make any sacrifice" to hold on to his "liberty, freedom, and independence." With these things, a man had "everything[;] . . . without them, nothing."

Texas meant liberty, independence, and a fresh start for the men who were made legends there. We have those legends left to inspire us today, but, as I write these words, I feel a pang of sorrow. How will our sons become men in the bureaucratized, risk-averse, feminist post-America our elites envision for us? Fathers seeking a way out of the postmodern trap could do much worse than looking back to the time of frontier America, when Americans followed a Lone Star that made boys into men, and men into legends. c

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The Last Silesian

by Leo Yankevich

Above us: cawing rooks and grey clouds.
Around us: leafless trees and falling snow.
It's late in January, 60 years
since Gleiwitz-Petersdorf was "liberated."

Anne, a frail and tiny woman of eighty,
and the last Silesian on our street,
points her left hand toward the frozen ground
and rests her right upon a walking stick.

—"When Stalin's army came, the NKVD
tortured, raped and murdered our people.
Both of my parents were among the dead
buried here inside a mass grave."—

In her sad voice there are hints of dialect.
—"Later on, Poles from the East exhumed them,
planted trees, and built this lovely park."—
The dialect of the dead, and the vanquished.

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Cowboy Heroes

Learning the Code of the West

by Roger D. McGrath

Whatever happened to Randolph Scott
ridin' the range alone?
Whatever happened to Gene and Tex
And Roy and Rex, the Durango Kid?
Whatever happened to Randolph Scott
His horse plain, as can be?
Whatever happened to Randolph Scott
Has happened to the best of me.

So sang the Statler Brothers in their 1974 country hit. For those of us who grew up on a diet of Westerns at the local theater, the song had particular resonance. The cowboys were our heroes. There were dozens to choose from. My favorite among the B Western stars was William Boyd, who made 66 films as Hopalong Cassidy beginning in 1935 and ending in 1948. The movies continued to be shown regularly through the late 40's and well into the 50's. Although never ranked the number one cowboy actor in annual polls, he notched the number two spot seven times and was in the top five for 15 years. Riding across the screen on Topper, his white stallion, he had not only the fastest gun in the Old West but the greatest smile and laugh. The white-haired actor was something of a fatherly figure to us kids, dispensing sage advice to the young ranch hands on the Bar 20 and, indirectly, to us. Hoppy would occasionally shoot a gun out of an enemy's hand or wound a scoundrel, but, most of the time, he shot to kill. Despite his warm smile and genial nature, Hoppy could turn fierce. He was deadly, and everyone knew it. He also was usually attired all in black. I don't know where the nonsense got started that, in B Westerns, the good guys wore white hats and the bad guys black, because many heroes, including Hopalong Cassidy, had a black hat covering their head.

I can remember getting my Hopalong Cassidy outfit for Christmas. I still have a photo of me standing in front of our house in full Hoppy attire with my cap pistols drawn. God, Guns, and Hoppy! Several of my friends have old photos of themselves in similar dress and poses. We were stoked. We went to the Saturday matinee armed and ready. When cowboys blazed away on the silver screen, we would draw our cap guns and let 'em rip. We pretended the bad guys falling from their horses were victims of our deadly fire. We could not have had more fun.

In 1995, the town of Lone Pine, in California's Owens Valley, hosted a Hopalong Cassidy festival to commemorate the 100th anniversary of William Boyd's birth. It would be a three-day vacation for my wife and me. I got tickets and made reservations well in advance. Well I did, because a couple hundred people arrived to pack the small town in the shadow of the Sierra Nevada and the Alabama Hills, the location of dozens of Hoppys. Horseback rides, tours of shooting sites, Hoppy impersonators, barbecues, Western bands, and Hopalong Cassidy films filled the days and nights.

My favorite moment came on the second night, when a projector and screen were set up in a remote location in the Alabama Hills to show a Hoppy to a hundred hearty souls gathered there. The temperature, which had been moderate during the day, dropped dramatically with nightfall. A brilliantly clear sky allowed a million stars and the moon to shine brightly. Snowfields in the towering Sierra Nevada were illuminated. Gradually, everyone fell silent, as if collectively contemplating the awesome beauty of nature. I was reminded of Robert W. Service:

Were you ever out in the Great Alone, when the moon
was awful clear,
And the icy mountains hemmed you in with a silence
you most could hear . . .

The silence was broken when the old projector began humming and clattering and *Hopalong Cassidy Enters*, the first in the series of 66 Hoppys, flashed on the screen. For ten minutes, Hopalong Cassidy does not appear in the movie. Then, suddenly, he is seen astride Topper, racing down a steep slope. At that moment, a huge cheer erupted from us Hoppy fans seated among the boulders of the Alabama Hills. Some fans leapt to their feet clapping and stomping. Others were overcome by emotion. In a few seconds, we were all transported back to our early childhood—and we loved it.

Several years ago, a clever fellow wrote a book about learning everything that is really important in kindergarten. Maybe so, but most of us who had gathered in the Alabama Hills began learning those things before kindergarten, watching Hopalong Cassidy.

When it came to big-budget Westerns, I did not have a favorite actor, but I did have a favorite director—John Ford. There were other directors who made great Westerns, but no one who did so as consistently as John Ford. He had a feel for characters and the ability to tell their story like no one else. When Orson Welles was asked which directors had inspired him, he replied: "The old masters. By which I mean John Ford, John Ford, and John Ford." Of my baker's-dozen list of the greatest Westerns ever made, five were directed by John Ford. I list the 13 in chronological order, not daring to attempt to rank them by better and best. However, with a six-shooter to my head, I would put *Stagecoach* in the number one slot and *The Searchers* in number two, both products of John Ford's genius.

If the B Westerns started the education of us kids—portray-

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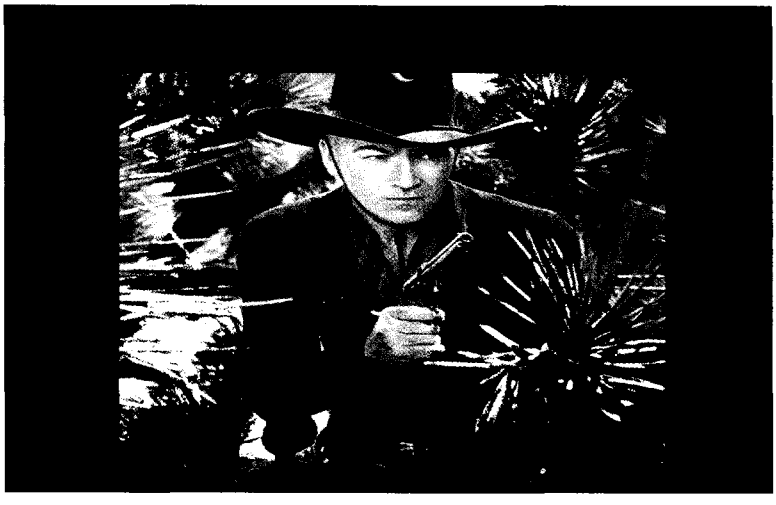
ing especially the behavior expected of men—then the big-budget Westerns continued the process with tales of our ancestors, the lessons we should learn in life, the moral dilemmas we face, and the complexity of our own natures. With courageous but flawed characters, epic stories, strong musical scores, and grand vistas, the Western was a powerful genre of film—so much so that, when John Ford testified before the Directors Guild, although most of the movies he directed were not Westerns, he said, "I'm John Ford. I make Westerns."

What Ford did best was capture the character of the people and the spirit of the times. This is exactly what most Westerns made since Ford's death in 1973 have not done. Moreover, Ford used music to help tell the story and arouse emotions, often selecting period pieces with melodies that tap in to the American soul. Before the credits are over in *Stagecoach*, the music has foreshadowed the themes in the movie and drawn the viewer into another time and place. By the time—only a minute into the movie—the cavalry officer takes the message from the telegrapher and reads it out loud, exclaiming, "Geronimo!" I am no longer watching a movie but lost in a time tunnel, watching real events unfold. The characters appear just as real. Occasionally, they were the real guys. Take a look at the three cowboys walking on the wooden sidewalk into the camera as the stagecoach arrives in town. They are painfully lean with skin that is taut and leathery. They walk with a gait that reveals old injuries from fractious horses and ornery steers. They are no actors.

Stagecoach could be called the first of the "disaster" movies. A group of people, thrown together by circumstances beyond their control, face the prospect of death. Crowded into a stagecoach and under severe duress, the people are forced to reveal their true natures. The ensemble cast could not have been better. Thomas Mitchell is the alcoholic doctor and Union veteran of the Civil War. John Carradine, the polished, chivalrous, and touchy Confederate veteran, is Mitchell's antagonist and advocate of the Lost Cause. Louise Platt is the proper and pregnant wife of a cavalry officer. Claire Trevor is her opposite, the weathered survivor of the demimonde. George Bancroft is the U.S. marshal suspicious of motives and devoted to the law. Andy Devine is the friendly and boisterous driver, occasionally breaking the tension with his colorful language and stories. Donald Meek is the diminutive and meek drummer. Berton Churchill is the banker concealing his dishonesty with his hail and well-met behavior. John Wayne is the wayward and wild young cowpoke with a pure heart.

Berton Churchill and Donald Meek show us how not to behave. The others, despite their flaws, past problems, and indiscretions, show us how to behave. They all rise to the occasion. The men are strong, brave, tough, and determined—so, too, are the women. The men are fierce when provoked and deadly. Thomas Mitchell sobers up enough to deliver Mrs. Mallory's baby. Similarly, Andy Devine, for all his country-bumpkin characteristics, drives like Jehu until suffering a wound. John Carradine dies like an officer and gentleman, exposing himself to Apache bullets and arrows while dropping one warrior after another. Louise Platt learns that form is not as important as substance. Clair Trevor reveals a heart of gold. George Bancroft tempers his sense of justice with mercy. John Wayne becomes, well, John Wayne.

John Ford made John Wayne. Without Ford, Wayne could become a caricature of himself—consciously larger than life. Under Ford's direction, Wayne could be surprisingly subtle and nuanced in his portrayal of heroic figures. Ford understood that the 6'4" and ruggedly handsome former Southern Cal football player filled up the screen. There was no need to exaggerate his actions to focus the viewer's attention—quite the opposite. Understatement was powerful. The only criticism I have of Ford is when he forgot this. For some reason, he occasionally injected buffoonish humor into his movies. A break in the tension is one thing, but the comic numbers in the cavalry trilogy of *Fort Apache*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, and *Rio Grande* are often so slapstick that I'm suddenly reminded that I am watching a movie. At the same time, Wayne is at his best, and the movies themselves are three of Ford's five best Westerns.



Melanie Anderson

One of my tests for a great movie is simple: Do I want to watch it again? I do not know how many times I have seen *Stagecoach*, but I could watch it again tonight—and tomorrow night. I can also watch individual scenes over and over again. How many movies can one say that of today? *Stagecoach* did not come from a script concocted by some callow youth in Hollywood but from Ernest Haycox's short story, "Stage to Lordsburg." Haycox, one of America's finest writers of Western fiction, based his tales on actual historical events. His "Stage to Lordsburg" was influenced not only by the Apache Wars in the Southwest, though, but by Bret Harte's "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" and Guy de Maupassant's "*Boule de Suif*." *Stagecoach* is a case study in good literature being turned into a great movie.

Although up against unusually stiff competition in the single-greatest year in American filmmaking, 1939, *Stagecoach* was nominated for seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director. It scored two victories, Best Score and Best Supporting Actor (for Thomas Mitchell's portrayal of Doc Boone). It also made John Wayne, who had starred in dozens of B Westerns, a household name. As the Ringo Kid, he dominated every scene he was in, from his sudden appearance on the side of the Lordsburg road, twirling and cocking his Winchester rifle, to his shootout with the Plummer boys.

Wayne's character is in the great tradition of Western heroes. There is a lot of James Fenimore Cooper's Natty Bumppo in him. The Ringo Kid is a product of the frontier, the natural man with a pure heart, uncorrupted by civilization. He has an intuitive sense of right and wrong, of justice, and of love that is not distorted by artificial norms imposed by society. He is guileless, has courage in abundance, and, despite his youth,

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has a world of experience in the things that count—riding, shooting, and fighting Indians. He exemplifies the Code of the West: A man's word is his bond; great deference is paid to women; a man is expected to stand and fight; death is preferable to dishonor.

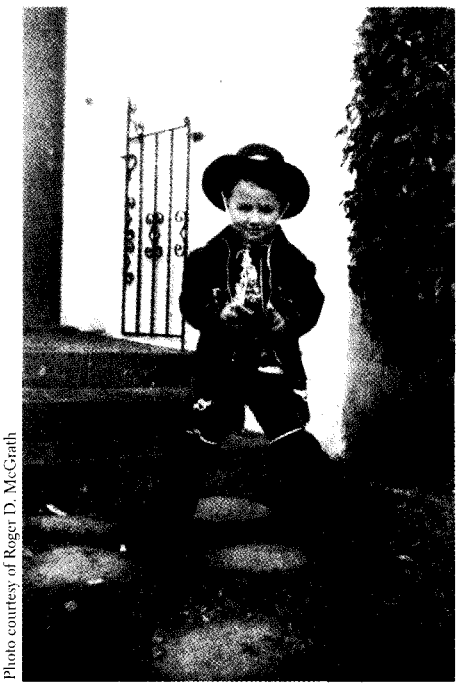

Photo courtesy of Roger D. McGrath

Although John Ford may not have had a rival in directing Westerns, there were actors who gave John Wayne a run for his money. Physically as big as Wayne, better looking and better built, Randolph Scott appeared in more Westerns and was a huge box-office draw. Jimmy Stewart appeared in nearly as many Westerns (of the big-budget variety) as Wayne and was one of the Hollywood's finest and most-likeable actors. Marlon Brando was brilliant in *One Eyed Jacks* and in *The Appaloosa*. In *They Died With Their Boots On*, Errol Flynn, dashingly handsome before dissipation and alcoholism took their toll, was the Custer that George Armstrong dreamed of being. A young Steve McQueen delivered a great performance in *Nevada Smith*. Joel McCrea, Audie Murphy, Gregory Peck, Clint Eastwood, Robert Mitchum, and others had their moments, too.

An actor who might have surpassed them all, including John Wayne, if he had made more Westerns was Gary Cooper. The tall, lean, lanky, slow-talking Cooper was the perfect cowboy. After playing bit parts in silent movies, the Montana native was cast as the Virginian in the movie of the same name in 1929. Although he and the movie were hits, Cooper was not subsequently typecast as a cowboy, and he made only a handful of Westerns in his long career. Several of those that he did make, though, are classics. One of them, *The Westerner*, has Cooper and Walter Brennan engaged in the longest and best exchange of looks and words in Western-movie history. The two play off each other brilliantly. Cooper's part is especially difficult, because he subtly has to let the audience understand that he is inventing his tale about his character's relationship with Lily Langtry while appearing convincing to Brennan. Cooper does both, expressing a wide range of emotions through his eyes, which seem made for the camera. And, as one of my female students put it in a seminar on Western films, Cooper was "at the height of his physical attractiveness."

Cooper's most endearing role comes in *Along Came Jones*. Playing the most naive and innocent cowpoke who ever rode down the trail, he captures not only our hearts but that of Loretta Young, the girlfriend of badman Dan Duryea. Even though the movie parodies Westerns, Cooper, as Melody Jones, lives by the Code of the West. He may be a rube and a bumbler, but he ultimately takes a stand in the face of death.

Facing down death is exactly what he did in his greatest Western, *High Noon*. Against all odds and without support, he is determined to stand up to the Miller gang. That Cooper had aged dramatically since he made *The Westerner* 12 years earlier made him perfect to play town marshal Will Kane. Kane knows he has lost some of his speed and physical prowess, but, living by the Code of the West, he will not skip town. "I'll die before I'll run," is how Westerners put it.

Much has been made about screenwriter Carl Foreman making *High Noon* an allegory about the Hollywood blacklist. Foreman's script, however, was based on John W. Cunningham's classic Western short story, "The Tin Star," which appeared in *Collier's* in 1947. While Foreman does get in his digs—the judge takes down the scales of justice and the American flag before fleeing town—the movie essentially comes down to a man, Gary Cooper, living by the Code of the West despite being abandoned by the fainthearted. If anything, the movie argues against collectivism. The townsfolk—the people—are craven. Marshal Will Kane is the rugged individualist and hero. Even the outlaws—determined, brave, ruthless, and deadly—come across as better than the townsfolk. Grace Kelly, the young bride and Quaker and perhaps the most exquisitely beautiful woman ever to appear on the silver screen, abandons her pacifism for the man she loves and blasts one of the outlaws into eternity. It couldn't get better!

Although *High Noon* was shot in black and white—to enhance its grim tone—and does not have the grand sweeping vistas that Westerns are known for, it has everything else, especially Gary Cooper. His portrayal of the aging marshal is a *tour de force* and won him the Academy Award for Best Actor. Laconic as usual, Cooper reveals Will Kane's emotions and intentions through his eyes and expressions. Nothing is exaggerated. The viewer could be watching a newsreel of real action—and the action unfolds in real time, as ticking clocks remind us. The score features the Oscar-winning "Do Not Forsake Me, O My Darlin'," sung by the incomparable Tex Ritter. The supporting cast is outstanding. Katy Jurado, playing Kane's erstwhile mistress, knocks me out. With her large, sad eyes and Spanish-accented English, she tells Lloyd Bridges, who plays Kane's deputy, Harvey Pell, "I'm going to tell you something about you and your friend, Kane. You're a good-looking boy. You have big, broad shoulders. But he is a man. It takes more than big broad shoulders to make a man, Harvey." Will Kane was a man. So, too, was Gary Cooper.

Whatever happened to Johnny Mack Brown
And Alan "Rocky" Lane?
Whatever happened to Lash LaRue?
I'd love to see them again.
Whatever happened to Smiley Burnett
Tim Holt and Gene Autry?
Whatever happened to all of these
Has happened to the best of me.

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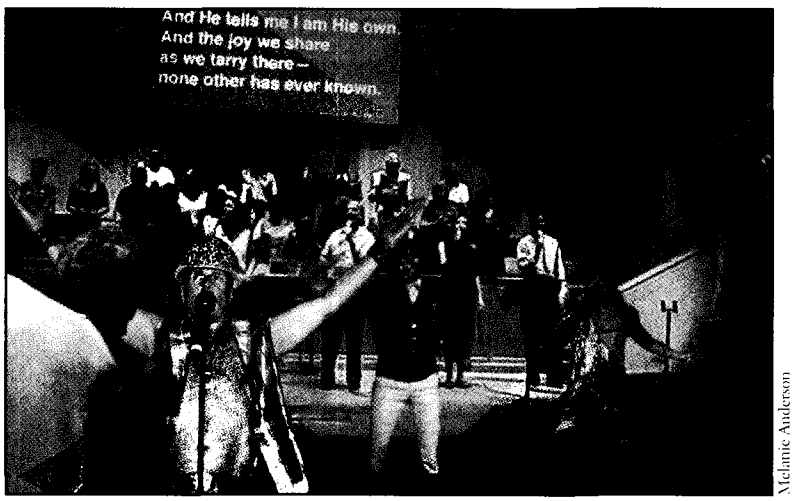
Effeminate Gospel, Effeminate Christians

From Authority to Influence

by Aaron D. Wolf



Melanie Anderson

Every definition of masculinity into which our Lord Jesus Christ does not fit belongs in the rubbish heap. Indeed, there could be no greater example of a man than He. Contrary to modern portrayals, Jesus was neither a sensitive metrosexual nor a macho-macho man. The tenderness that He displayed toward those whom He loved (including His enemies) was paternal and sacrificial, focused not on self-gratification or expression but on the real needs of those He came to save. The Son of Man did not strut about flexing His muscles or cursing at His enemies, because He possessed the quiet confidence of One absolutely certain of His mission and did not need the approval of others in order to maintain that certainty. Nor did He need to "be His own boss" in order to be a man (Isaiah called Him "God's slave"), insisting, instead, that He came not to do His own will but the "will of Him Who sent Me"—His Father. He resisted the temptation of Satan to perform a spectacular feat of strength by casting Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, choosing, rather, the way of the Cross. This Man wept—for Jerusalem, for the family of Lazarus—not out of hypersensitivity or fear but because of His great love for a people languishing under the weight of their own sin. Even in the hour of His torment in Gethsemane, He prayed for those entrusted to His care while battling the Old Serpent, whose head He crushed in the greatest battle ever fought by a man. And He emerged from the grave a King, still bearing the wounds of battle. There will be no democracy on Judgment Day when "the Man comes around," because only one vote will count: that of the God Who humbled Himself in order to save the ones He loves.

This is not the language of the American Christian man, who strolls, rosy-cheeked and all aflutter, "in the garden alone,"

> while the dew is still on the roses.
> And the voice I hear falling on my ear—
> the Son of God—discloses.
> And He walks with me and He talks with me.
> And He tells me I am His own.
> And the joy we share as we tarry there—
> none other has ever known.

These familiar strains from the popular hymn "In the Garden" represent the modern American imagination of the essence of Christianity: a romantic fantasy in which a chivalric Jesus rescues me from my own loneliness and despair and fills all of my emotional needs. This effeminate picture of the Christian life, from the dramatic conversion experience to the long walks in the garden alone with "Jesus," has produced generations of effeminate Christian men who either allow themselves to be consumed by their imaginary "walks with Jesus" or else drift away from church altogether, knowing that their best efforts at spiritual courtship will fall well short of those of the women who now, more than ever, fill the pews of America's churches.

When the West was Christian, Church and society encouraged men to follow the example of the Son of Man: Endowed with headship yet obedient to higher authorities, a man must use his physical abilities and natural strength and demeanor to provide for and protect his family, his people, laying down his life if necessary. This requires the cultivation of courage, discipline, and honor in boys, which used to be the goal of the education that our churches used to provide.

Today, American culture presents boys with icons of "masculinity," such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, who glory in sodomizing women while pumping iron in a gym. Ideally, physical strength is to be put into the service of self-gratification, not of protecting and providing for "weaker vessels." The macho American man is a "selfish hedonist," who lives fast, plays hard, and beds women at will. Loving a wife, rearing children, and

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Associate editor Aaron D. Wolf is a Church historian.

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serving others are the least of his concerns.

The flip-side of this concept of manhood is the homosexual, another sodomizer, whose very label means self-gratification. Adam and Steve cannot properly assume the mantle of responsibility that God calls marriage, because homosexual sex, devoid of the divinely instituted roles of man and wife—chief among them, the possibility of and openness to procreation—is nothing more than mutual self-gratification. Saint Paul calls it "that which is unseemly," "vile affections," "dishonouring the body," and "against nature." The homosexual's "orientation" is open rebellion against God and His created order. Furthermore, a society that celebrates this (or any other) sort of hedonistic masculinity is warring against the very essence of Christianity.

Jesus taught us to pray "Our Father" not because He lived in a male-dominated society but because His saving mission involved granting us a share in His Divine Sonship through the "adoption of sons." Therefore, the very essence of Christianity is masculine, an expression of patriarchal authority and the place and inheritance enjoyed by the Firstborn Son. Such authority has long been maligned by the liberal mainline churches in America, which are happy to ordain women and, now, open homosexuals. Yet it is not merely the Scripture-denying mainlines who have been infected by this disease. The image of the effeminate clergyman is nearly universal in America—not just among liberals but among self-identified conservatives. The myriad queer priests on the Catholic side have as their counterpart the femmy Protestant pastor who must rely on silly stories and Dr. Phil psychobabble to carry his sermons. Vasectomized fathers of 1.5 children make their vestments look like dresses as they tug at the heart-strings of men and women. Evangelical megachurch pastors, with their khakis and polo shirts, take up the role of vicar of Jesus-the-Boyfriend, as their sermons or chats insist on fanning the flames of passion for Christ instead of proclaiming the Passion of Christ. One popular conservative pastor even champions something he calls "Christian hedonism," in a book entitled, appropriately, *Desiring God*.

Gone are the liturgics that place the crucified Christ and His Body and Blood at the center, and gone are hymns that call God "a bulwark never failing." In their place are the ubiquitous and repetitive choruses that distort the message of historic Christianity and replace it with a celebration of feminine emotions: "The simplest of all love songs / I want to bring to you / So I let my words be few / Jesus I am so in love with you."

The modern "praise and worship" experience resembles a soft-rock concert (a genre made for women), where the "worship leader" and his swooning sidekicks, the praise band, take center stage. Each stands gazing into the middle distance (where the Spirit of God seems to be hovering above the congregation), his (or, more often, her) heels tapping while one hand grips the wireless microphone and the other is lifted toward the ceiling, as if serving as a conduit of sacramental grace.

This campy environment is supplemented by something called "small groups," a method of spiritual cognitive dissonance perfected by Bill Hybels at suburban Chicago's Willow Creek Community Church. Unlike the authoritarian "I-talk-and-you-listen" environment in which Christians traditionally learned the Scriptures and teachings of the Church, small groups are a "safe" environment in which believers can take turns interpreting the Bible and sharing all of their deepest traumas and experiences while a leader guides the conversation. The emphasis here is on vulnerability and openness, which, when coupled with group "accountability," have always been the hallmarks of behavior-modification therapy.

What happens when the self-identified "conservative" churches encourage men to behave as women, swooning "in the garden" and "knowing" Jesus in an imaginary romance, or in "safe" small groups, or in effeminate "praise and worship" experiences? What happens to families when a church professes belief in the authority of the Bible and in the undeniable fact that marriage is between one man and one woman, then teaches husbands and fathers that the essence of the Faith is found within, in the desires of their own hearts?

The answer is all around us. Christian churches in America have long lost their authority to speak prophetically both to the culture and to their own children. Christian fathers no longer see themselves as heads of households. And, as concerned women rise up and try to fill the void that these men leave, they often end up forsaking their own natural roles as childbearers, childrearers, and "keepers at home," as Saint Paul called them. In conservative churches, in which homosexuality is still called sin, Christian men forsake the natural use of their wives not for other men but for contracepted sex, which Martin Luther called "sodomy." They, too, become "God haters."

Today's Christian man struggles to be a real father to his children. Once, as I stood out in front of a church before the service, talking with another father, one of the young members of the church youth group walked by, her skirt too small to measure. "Where in the world is her father!" I remarked, "and why does he let her own a skirt like that, let alone wear it to church?"

"Uh, I dunno," the other man replied. "You know, Britney is 14 now. If Pastor told her she couldn't wear that, she'd probably leave and never come back. Besides, what's her dad supposed to do, lock her in a closet?"

Perplexed, I explained the Britney situation to the pastor: "Isn't it about time that we had some kind of general policy about proper attire in the service? Nothing too specific, but just a gentle admonition to young ladies that they refrain from wearing shorts, miniskirts, and the like to church?"

Chuckling (after realizing I was serious), the pastor said, "I'm not sure of how well that would go over. Besides, I'm not certain that that would be the best thing for Britney or anyone else. They've got to *want* to be modest, because God looks at our hearts. He's not caught up in externals."

This all-too-common response to spiritual problems in churches reinforces a particularly insidious moral disorder: Since God looks on the heart, we need not have any rules. No sex distinctions, no modesty, no "Yes, Sir," and "Yes, Ma'am," no "You may not behave that way while you're at our house"—in short, no protection against the "better angels of our nature" which, being sinful and lacking any moral formation, are really little demons. And neither the state nor society nor, in most cases, the Church will support a father who lays down the law, puts his foot down, acts like a man. The same goes for pastors, who so often must walk the line when it comes to the preaching of God's law, lest they offend the sensibilities of a morally unformed congregation. Preach all you want about incivility, greed, and unkindness, but mention divorce, contraception, immodesty, or anything else that hits too close to home, and you might just find yourself transferred or your salary cut in half.

In her insightful work *The Feminization of American Culture*, Ann Douglas traces the problem of the effeminacy of the American Christian man to the disestablishment of churches. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Congregationalist

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and Episcopalian churches that were established in the states along the East Coast were disestablished, and all of the civil benefits that those churches had enjoyed—the power to levy taxes to support the pastor and the church facilities, the social status for pastors that this system required and protected, the necessity of church membership for those who wished to enjoy certain social benefits—were stripped away. She is quick to point out that disestablishment had its own intellectual antecedents—in particular, the democratizing Yankee spirit known today as the American Way, the culture that ultimately produced television advertising and "Rock the Vote!" Outside of clerical circles, the leading lights of this age were averse to the idea of any sort of enforced religion. Thomas Jefferson, for example, supported the disestablishment of the Episcopal Church in Virginia.

Before disestablishment, masculine Christianity was already being gutted by the so-called Great Awakening of the 18th century. In his defense of these controversial "revivals" (for example, his treatise on the *Religious Affections*), Jonathan Edwards insisted that "Gracious affections . . . arise from the mind's being enlightened, richly and spiritually to understand or apprehend divine things." Edwards, a speculative thinker, also redefined sin as "selfishness" and holiness as "disinterested benevolence." When God causes a sinner to be born again (apart from Baptism), He realigns the mind, will, and affections: The mind is then free to exercise pure reason, ascertaining the truth of Scripture; the will is free to pursue God and not the self; and the heart is filled with love for divine light. The "religious affections," then, become evidence that God is at work. "If we be not in good earnest in religion, and our wills and inclinations be not strongly exercised, we are nothing."

This Edwardean perspective came to be the guiding force of New England's "New Divinity School," which influenced large segments of churches in America, particularly in the North. Samuel Hopkins, Edwards' intellectual successor, placed increasing emphasis on "heart religion" and even went as far as to say that ours is the "best of all possible worlds," because God is required to work for the greater good for the majority of His creatures. For Hopkins, the Cross of Christ was not an objective, vicarious substitution but a public declaration of divine justice designed to stimulate sinners to choose to follow God (a teaching Edwards would have abhorred). This was a reworking of the Gospel in the spirit of the Enlightenment, a new, baptized form of individualism centered on the emotions, which fit nicely with the democratizing effort to disestablish the churches. Since the masculine idea of "forced religion" became anathema, Yankee pastors increasingly turned into salesmen, and women, not heads of households, began to play dominant roles in churches, trading authority for "influence."

By the early 19th century, another Edwardean thinker, Nathaniel Taylor, a close friend of Lyman Beecher (father of Harriet Beecher Stowe), was denying the historic Christian understanding of Original Sin (he defined sin as the acquired habit of selfishness) and proclaiming the effeminate "moral influence" theory of the Atonement: that Christ's Passion was a placard of just how much God cares—an invitation for a heartfelt response of faith. This led to the Second Great Awakening (1830's), in which Charles Finney applied Taylor's teachings by creating a traveling-circus atmosphere designed to garner conversions. After all, if man is capable of being wooed to "accept Christ," why not pull out all of the stops in order to accomplish that? This thinking led to the institutionalization of Finney's "anxious bench," now known as the "altar call." Audience members whose emotions have been stirred could come down to the "altar" and place *themselves* on it, making a decision to follow Jesus. This feminized version of "church" was accompanied by soul-stirring songs, whose theme was not the objective work of Christ but the feelings that Christ engenders within. The North and, after Reconstruction, the South became increasingly dominated by this "decision theology," in which men were taught that an effeminate "Christ" wants them to act just like him: wooing, begging, pleading, offering—not ruling, protecting, giving, saving.

While failing to recognize that an effeminate Gospel produces effeminate Christians, and that a democratized church polity means that those whom God has entrusted with responsibility and authority can be easily outvoted, Christian leaders have not failed to notice the problem of wussy Christian men. A century ago, evangelist (and former baseball star) Billy Sunday screamed and hollered about the sin of being a sissy man, yet he carried the feminists' torch of Prohibitionism. The late fundamentalist preacher Jack Hyles was fond of thundering, "Listen here, faggot. You'd better think twice if you think you're going to be admitted into my Bible college!" Yet he claimed that his entire ministry was founded on the night that he spent lying on his father's grave, blubbering and demanding that Jesus fill him with power. The Promise Keepers, perhaps the most popular "men's" movement, decry illegitimacy, pornography, and divorce while promoting the same sort of you-need-a-hug mentality that has helped men to find ample excuses for eschewing responsibility. Such movements are doomed to failure from the beginning because they proclaim a masculinity apart from the natural order and traditional Christian dogma. None of them challenges contraception. None of them questions the emphasis on heart religion. None of them demands that pastors preach a masculine Christ.

Traditionalist Christian denominations that do not hold "altar calls" and mass men's meetings are not immune to this form of effete Christianity. The marketplace mentality so permeates every facet of American culture that resistance is nearly futile. The traditionalists often walk a few paces behind, insisting that the methods of the feminized churches—which garner great attendance on Sunday morning—can be used as long as the message is orthodox. Don't we still have Sacraments at the guitar Mass? Can't we replace the old Lutheran Hymnal with "Jesus I Am So In Love With You," as long as we say the Nicene Creed—provided, of course, that we change "men" to "humans"? Shouldn't we be willing to do whatever it takes to woo people to come to church? If these questions are even asked, emasculation has already occurred. Men who are lured to church through such methods will only return if they feel that their needs are being met.

Men—pastors, fathers—do not need permission to take up their mantles of authority, any more than Our Lord did. God is still the Father of the baptized, no matter what their feelings or felt-needs are. And those earthly and spiritual fathers will answer to the ultimate Man for what they have done for those under their authority, no matter what the culture said. Boys still need fathers who are willing to teach them by example how to have courage, respect, and honor, and how to treat a lady; girls still need daddies who will keep them from dressing like harlots and stop any boy in his tracks who would harm their reputations; and wives—and congregations—still need men who will stand before them and say, with Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." c

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Essentials for a Lasting Peace in the Middle East

What Must be on the Table

by David A. Hartman

No solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is possible unless we clearly define the obstacles that can and must be surmounted.

This conflict, which culminated in open warfare in 1948, is rooted in the incompatible claims of two distinct groups regarding the same territory and resources. In 1947, the United Nations partitioned the western and southern parts of the Mandate of Palestine ("Cisjordan"), creating the state of Israel, which was intended for the resettlement of Jewish refugees from World War II. The balance, encompassing the West Bank and Gaza, was to be a Palestinian homeland affiliated with Jordan. At intervals since 1948, hostilities have included the participation of Arab League nations in open warfare. At other intervals, cease-fires and peace negotiations have temporarily suspended the war. The underlying state of emergency, however, has never ceased.

Repeated attempts by the United States to broker peace—Camp David I, the Oslo Accords, Camp David II, and President George W. Bush's Road Map—have thus far proved futile. Before the successful peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt and those between Israel and Jordan, it was not apparent that the Arab nations would accept a peace that recognized the legitimacy of the state of Israel; today, however, this is no longer the case, as was demonstrated by the Saudi peace initiative of 2002.

Many facets of the peace process are open to debate, but this much is clear: A lasting peace is not possible unless each party accepts the right of the other to exist. Unfortunately, neither side's leadership has been willing to make the necessary compromises that would enable the peaceful sharing of one country or, alternatively, that would secure a peace agreement that defined the boundaries of two sovereign states. The Likud Party leadership has permitted a continuing Israeli expansion of permanent settlements, outposts, and barriers in Palestinian territories (even during negotiations). It has continued to express its commitment to permanent Israeli occupation of the West Bank, in diametric opposition to the objective of "land for peace" negotiations. The extremist factions of the Palestinians, on the other hand, have shown no inclination to entertain an end to hostilities that does not include the "right of return" of their refugees, whose influx would dramatically alter the demographic balance in Israel, and they have remained committed to the "total liberation of Palestine."

The recent Geneva Initiative has provided encouraging prescriptions for a *real* road map toward the creation of a nonmilitarized Palestinian state policed by its own security force. In addition, the initiative calls for the establishment of a multinational force "to provide security guarantees to the Parties as a deterrent, and to oversee the implementation . . . of the Agreement," which would "only be withdrawn . . . by the Agreement of the Parties." Jerusalem would be policed primarily by Israel. An implementation and verification group would be established by the parties and would include the United States, Russia, the European Union, the United Nations, and other entities to be agreed upon by the parties to oversee the multinational force and implementation of the agreement. This would provide the necessary security for the evacuation of Israeli military and settlements on an expedited timetable of 36 months.

The Geneva Initiative recognizes the harsh reality of the situation: Peace will be dependent upon a clear separation of the hostile parties into equally sovereign states with mutually agreed-upon permanent borders.

The original borders of the state of Israel were established by the U.N. Partition Plan of Palestine in 1947, which assigned 57 percent of the land area to Israel. By the end of the 1948-49 war, Israel had expanded her land area to 79 percent of the former Palestine, and, by 1967, she had occupied the remaining land of the Palestinian territories as well. Following the Six Day War of 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973, U.N. Resolution 242 called for a "withdrawal . . . from territories occupied in the recent conflict," which has generally been interpreted to mean the pre-1967 borders. This "green line" remains the internationally accepted borders of the Palestinian territories. The occupation of the Golan Heights, taken from Syria and still held by Israel, did not involve the Palestinians, while the Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt as a consequence of the 1982 treaty.

Starting with the 1967 occupation of the Palestinian territories, Israel commenced building settlements, bypass roads, and military checkpoints, a process which accelerated under Prime Minister Menachem Begin. They were substantially funded by U.S. "resettlement grants" and loan guarantees and mostly built upon confiscated Palestinian land in the territories. Currently, there are approximately 150 settlements in the territories, housing 210,000 settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (with a goal of 250,000 by 2010), and a few settlements in the Gaza Strip.

The clear intent to make these settlements permanent was shown by the corridors of settlements Israel proposed to retain in her proposals for the Camp David II peace plan. If accepted, this plan would have further shrunk the West Bank territory provided for the Palestinians and segmented it into cantons encircled by Israel. This division, in the beginning, would have been on a "temporary basis," establishing corridors of occupation that would seal off Palestinian territory from the banks of the Jordan River and from Jordan herself. While this

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isolation would have been eliminated (eventually), the principal segmentation, an Israeli enclave of "Greater Jerusalem" extending to the Jordan River, would have remained. The Camp David II proposals did not reasonably provide for Palestinian West Bank sovereignty or territory, and the predictable result was to incite another round of terrorism, which justified Israel's military retaliation.

The Geneva Initiative, by contrast, recognized the green line as the basis for real border negotiations with the Palestinians. Any addition or subtraction of land would be considered on a one-for-one basis based on like value. The initiative also calls for the removal of all Israeli settlements from Palestinian territories and a provision for real sovereignty—namely, the ability of the Palestinians to govern all of their citizens and land area uncompromised, other than by their agreement to be a "nonmilitarized state."

Unfortunately, Israeli Prime Minister Sharon has acted unilaterally to build "security" fencing according to proposals by his military along the lines of Camp David II, with comparable additional Israeli annexation of Palestinian territory.

A viable peace will come only if the problem of the Palestinian refugees is resolved. As of 1998, Miftah listed a total of 7.8 million Palestinian Arabs worldwide. Nearly half of them—3.7 million—qualified as refugees under UNRWA's operational definition of "persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, who lost both their homes and means of livelihood" as a result of the 1948 war, or their descendants (*www.un.org/unrwa/refugees/whois.html*). Some 1.2 million still remain in 59 recognized refugee camps, more than a half-century after the first war. All 3.7 million of these refugees cannot be realistically repatriated. Unlimited "right of return" will not be acceptable to Israel since this would dramatically change her character as a homeland for the Jewish people. A majority of these refugees do not desire to live in Israel anyway: A recent survey found that only ten percent of them wish to live in a Jewish state, and, of those, only ten percent desire Israeli citizenship (*www.hashd.org/english/Shikaki.htm*).

Where and how could the Palestinians who are currently in refugee camps be resettled? Jordan might accept the 300,000 in her refugee camps, or possibly more, if she is provided the economic assistance and water resources necessary to develop arable but presently uncultivated land. The remainder could be relocated in the West Bank (with the necessary development assistance), if the majority of the 210,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank, along with those in the Gaza Strip, return to Israel. The balance of registered refugees should be entitled to restitution based on the circumstances of their relocation. Restitution should also apply to up to one million Jewish refugees forced to immigrate to Israel from the Muslim world in retaliation for the Arab-Israeli wars. Restitution funding may also provide a financial incentive to the current host countries to accept the Palestinians as citizens.

The city of Jerusalem is sacred to three principal world religions; before the permanent boundaries of the Israeli and Palestinian states can be determined, there must be agreement on its status. Jerusalem poses the most difficult test of the possibility of peaceful coexistence of the Israelis and Palestinians. The area including and surrounding Jerusalem contains concentrated populations of both Israelis and Palestinians, as well as religious sites of international importance. The proximity and concentration of indigenous citizens and tourists provides targets for terrorism, and the sacred sites provide the opportunity for incendiary incidents.

The division of the population of Jerusalem in 1947 at the time of partition recognized the Jews in the west side and the Arab Palestinians in the east. The green line that Israel unilaterally drew in 1949 still encompasses the primary legitimate concentration of Jews in Jerusalem. After 1967, the Israelis ignored it and began to form settlements throughout East Jerusalem. The "municipal border" declared by Israel in 1980 annexed a much larger metropolitan area, including Palestinian East Jerusalem.

> The moderate Israelis and Palestinians have spoken by the rational and equitable resolutions of the Geneva Initiative, though their governments have not yet joined them. It is our hope that the U.S. government will take this opportunity to end its unintentional promotion of the stalemate, for the sake of the conflicting parties and for the sake of U.S. national security and integrity.

The continued building of Jewish settlements in much of East Jerusalem and its suburbs has compounded the problem of resolving the city's future. Jerusalem, however, is not Mecca, being interwoven in the foundations of both the Jewish and Christian religions. The Jews have the more compelling case to be the principal custodians of Jerusalem, provided the rights of all parties are preserved. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's proposals at Camp David II suggested a far larger area of Israeli control of Jerusalem than had any previous proposals, and President Clinton's "bridging proposals" were nearly as one-sided, not only for the Jerusalem area but for retention of settlement corridors, with little *quid pro quo* offered to the Palestinians.

Israel's principal concern is her internal security. The peace treaties she has concluded with Egypt and Jordan have provided undisputed foreign borders to the east and the south, and mutually acceptable borders have been tacitly agreed upon with Lebanon. Only the Golan Heights, Syrian territory occupied by Israel since the 1967 Six Day War, remains in dispute. During the Oslo negotiations, even a resolution between Syria and Israel over the Golan Heights appeared to be possible as

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part of an overall accord between Israel and Palestine.

With Iraq's demise as a military power and Israel's friendly relations with Turkey, only Syria and possibly Iran remain potential foreign threats. From a military view of security, Israel holds a decisive strategic edge. The leaders of most Arab states believe that Israel enjoys decisive military superiority and are aware of their own states' comparative weaknesses in all of the traditional areas of power. Israel may continue to have greater capabilities, but her small territorial size makes her more vulnerable to weapons of mass destruction. Peace accords with the intent of a regional ban on WMD's should eventually be pursued as the final commitment to a lasting peace.

Given the relative prosperity of the Israelis, our financial support of Israel's military establishment and economy would be better spent on helping to finance the settlement of Palestinian refugees and developing the necessary infrastructure that will be required to ensure a successful and lasting resolution of the conflict.

Internal security, on the other hand, has been elusive, as terrorism has rendered the dream of a return to the Holy Land a nightmare. This can only be remedied by a proper resettlement of the Palestinian refugees and a guarantee of territorial security for the remaining Palestinian residents, which entails the creation of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state.

Palestinians who are accepted as permanent residents in Israeli territories, as well as any residual Jewish settlers accepted by the Palestinians (and any other minorities), must be granted equal rights as citizens. This would include the privileges of suffrage, representation, holding public office, and civil and criminal justice. At the same time, they must be subject to taxation, military service, and the legal restraints required of any other citizen. The assurance of these rights should be provided by the constitution of a republic whose officials are elected by the citizens to whom they are accountable. In order to assure the acceptance of these and other commitments to the implementation of peace accords, an international military force, as proposed by the Geneva Initiative, should be employed to suppress any internal insurgencies or problems at borders.

A comprehensive peace treaty should include an agreement regarding the equitable sharing of water resources between the Israelis and the Palestinians, as well as the neighboring states of Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Merkorot, the Israeli water utility, controls two thirds of the water development, storage, and distribution for both Israel and the occupied territories, totaling around 2,000 million cubic meters (MCM) per year. As of 1996, it is estimated that the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza were being allotted only 12 percent of combined water usage; the average Israeli consumes more than three times as much water for residential purposes than that which is provided to the average Palestinian. Israel uses over half of the combined water supply for an agricultural sector that provides less than three percent of GDP, whereas Palestinian agriculture is generally unirrigated. Only Merkorot is allowed to dig deep wells in the West Bank, and it pumps the principal output from these wells to Israel or Israeli settlements, which, as an extraction of resources from occupied land, violates international law. While Palestinians are prevented from digging deep wells and drawing water from their West Bank aquifer, Israeli settlements in the West Bank alone now draw more water from deep wells than the total amount allowed to the West Bank Palestinians.

An equitable water-sharing agreement with all riparians of the Jordan River—Israel, Jordan, Palestine, and Syria—under peaceful circumstances could be a "positive sum game." The damming of the Yarmouk River and an end to interference with its water distribution could provide Jordan with an additional 200 MCM per year, which could assist in the resettlement of refugees. Construction of wastewater plants in Jordan and the West Bank and increased surface water capture could augment the water supply. Given a regional peace, a still-broader Middle Eastern water plan could allow for the distribution of Turkey's excess of water capacity.

International law, which rather vaguely prescribes "equitable apportionment" and "reasonable use," generally includes various regulations for water sharing among states based on historic rights or acres of arable land, or *per capita*. Israel's share of riparian ground and surface water is excessive by any of these standards.

Clearly, any lasting peace will require more equitable water sharing by Israel with the West Bank and Gaza Palestinians, as well as with Jordan. Therefore, the guidelines for equitable water sharing must be on the table as part of a comprehensive peace agreement.

Given the importance of the refugee issue and the general economic circumstances of the Palestinians, international economic and development assistance will be vital to a lasting peace. A comparison of World Bank income statistics for the year 2000 reveals a $27,500 *per capita* income for the average Israeli *versus* $1,710 for the average Palestinian. Yet the Palestinians have an 86-percent literacy rate as well as time-tested entrepreneurial capabilities.

The past six decades have been a disaster for the Palestinian people. Over the same period, U.S. support of the Israeli economy and military has exceeded $100 billion; if we include indirect military costs, that figure could be well over $250 billion. Beyond U.S. military assistance, one can only guess at the enormity of wasted costs—*e.g.*, Israeli military expenditures, Palestinian relief assistance, and Arab League armaments—that have failed to bring the conflict one step closer to resolution. Indeed, the amount spent on hostilities and their

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consequences could have more than adequately financed a peaceful and equitable resolution long ago. The continuing rate of dissipation on the conflict, and the related turmoil in the Middle East, suggests that the means are available and affordable. Building homes and creating jobs for refugees will require arteries of transportation, industrial parks and supporting utilities, and water development and conservation. To this tab must be added resettlement costs and restitution. Regional resources should be developed and coordinated to supplement local resources.

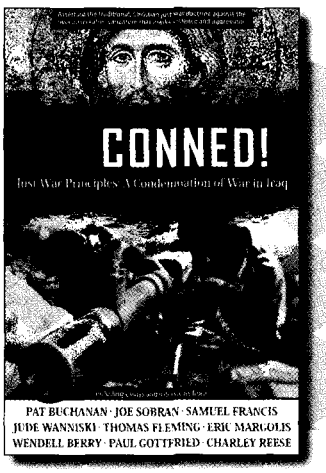
To finance the peace, the Geneva Initiative proposes an international commission composed of the parties themselves, the United Nations, the United States, UNRWA, the Arab host countries, the European Union, Russia, and others. The private sector should be encouraged to participate. In the biblical spirit of "beating swords into ploughshares," the funding of war should be replaced with the funding of peace.

Foreign interference no longer serves the best interests of either Israel or the Palestinians. During the quarter-century following the U.N. partition, the Arab unwillingness to recognize the Israeli state precluded the possibility of peaceful resolution. U.S. economic and military armaments enabled Israel to maintain military hegemony over the more sizable Arab armies. After a peace settlement between Israel and Egypt was brokered, greased with lavish U.S. aid to both countries, the rift in Arab solidarity should have made possible the success of broader peace accords. As continuing U.S. military and economic aid to Israel increased her relative superiority of arms, however, the United States, in effect, encouraged and financed Israeli encroachment on Palestinian territory. An additional perverse effect has been the promotion of the continued support, training, and arming of Palestinian terrorists by Israel's Arab neighbors.

It is unlikely that extreme Israeli nationalists will be willing to make the necessary concessions for peace, so long as the United States continues to finance new settlements, outposts, and defenses, and the weapons that shield Israel from Arab retaliation and international restraint. In a very real sense, then, the government of the United States is a major contributor to perpetuating the conflict.

It is time for the United States to make her support for Israel conditional on Israel's participation in a constructive peace process. Given the relative prosperity of the Israelis, our financial support of Israel's military establishment and economy would be better spent on helping to finance the settlement of Palestinian refugees and developing the necessary infrastructure that will be required to ensure a successful and lasting resolution of the conflict. Such a policy change is obviously in the interest of the United States and the Palestinians, but it is also in Israel's best interests, as many Israeli policy leaders have been arguing for years.

The change of Palestinian leadership and last year's unofficial Geneva Initiative both provide a more optimistic basis for the renewed quest for peace. The moderate Israelis and Palestinians have spoken by the rational and equitable resolutions of the Geneva Initiative, though their governments have not yet joined them. It is our hope that the U.S. government will take this opportunity to turn over a new leaf and end its unintentional promotion of the stalemate, for the sake of the conflicting parties and, more importantly, for the sake of U.S. national security and integrity. c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Play It Again, Plum!

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

"It has been well said of Bertram Wooster that though he may sink onto rustic benches and for a while give the impression of being licked into a custard, the old spirit will come surging back sooner or later."
—P.G. Wodehouse, *The Mating Season*

Wodehouse: A Life
by Robert McCrum
New York: W.W. Norton;
530 pp., $27.95

◆

Robert McCrum demurs from critical comparisons of P.G. Wodehouse with the great English writers, including Shakespeare and Dickens, arguing that "Wodehouse is a miniaturist and his work is not like theirs. He is closer in spirit to Jane Austen, who famously worked on a 'little bit (two inches wide)' of ivory."

To my mind, McCrum's concept of Wodehouse is slightly amiss—or perhaps it is the terminology that is inaccurate. Turning briefly from the field of English letters to that of Russian literature, we find the obvious example of Tolstoy immediately to hand. If ever there was a "great writer," Leo Tolstoy was it—for the reason, above all, that he anticipated Flannery O'Connor's dictum that the novelist should take for his subject none but what is of crucial importance and applied it (as she did) to the story as well as the novel (indeed, to nearly every line he ever wrote). McCrum, for his own part, claims this standard of cruciality for Wodehouse, when he writes that behind

> the Aberdeen terriers, the cocktail shakers, the banjos, the tartan

Melanie Anderson

spats, the pigs and the frantic telegrams . . . you find the figure of the 'laughing love god'. There is hardly a sentimental line among the millions that he wrote, and his expression of this universal theme is constrained by the profound Englishness of his character, but the quest for human connection is the whirring fly-wheel that keeps the intricate clockwork of his plots ticking, and makes his world go round.

I think McCrum is spot-on about that, yet his critical summation of the huge literary importance of P.G. Wodehouse is not the one with which I would have left the reader. The greatness of Wodehouse lies not in his having worked on two inches of ivory (or several more of sterling-silver cow creamer), but in his having created great art out of life's trifles. This is not the equivalent of perceiving tremendousness in trifles or revealing the universe in a droplet of water but the demonstration that genius, like an angel, can dance on the head of a pin, while transforming the pinhead into a thing as significantly crucial as the Throne of God, and the dance into a Grand Processional. The truth is that greatness and universality, in the wrong hands, are the plaything of Philistinism—the inexpressibly vulgar imaginative impulse that invented the literary grail known as the Great American Novel and that has sustained the quest for this hideous gold-plate trophy for a century and a half. If there is any such thing as the Great English Novel, it is probably something by D.H. Lawrence or, perhaps, Somerset Maugham. Assuredly, it is not *Psmith in the City*, *The Code of the Woosters*, *Meet Mr. Mulliner*, or *Uncle Fred in the Springtime*. This, I am guessing, is what Mr. McCrum is getting at when he refers to the "universality" of P.G. Wodehouse and the readiness of generations of his readers to "celebrate the magic of an English prose caught at a singular moment between mass culture and high art."

As typically intended, the motto "Art for art's sake" is founded on a misunderstanding of the nature, object, meaning, and purpose of art. It connotes a preoccupation with aesthetics to the exclusion of truth and with technique at the expense of meaning, and exalts the artist as supreme creator in place of the God Who alone is the artist's proper object, approachable by an operation of the practical intellect. But what if the object of

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art *is* its approach? And what if the artist regards himself not as God, or even as an angel performing upon a pin, but instead as a honeybee poised on a flower whose ritual dance indicates to his brothers the direction of the hive and its queen?

Such, of course, is the case with music. Unlike language, musical notation is nondenominative, nonreferential, inexplicit. Each individual note has "meaning" only in its relationship to other notes arranged in a pattern, unlike the single word that carries its own definite meaning independently from its prose text. In verse poetry, however, and finally in technically adept modernist prose, words bear more of the relationship to one another that notes do in a musical score. Viewed from this perspective, much 19th-century fiction (including Tolstoy's), while deeply "serious" in its subject matter and moral preoccupation, is careless in respect of its essentially rhetorical—as opposed to poetical—style. Great as "The Devil" or "Hadji Murád" are, I do not believe anyone ever relished these stories either for their intricate linguistic precision or the carefulness of their architectural structure. If J.S. Bach's ultimate subject was the Divine, then Wodehouse's was Laughter—and is not the Laughter of the Spheres, as an attribute of God, nearly as great a subject as God Himself? "For him," McCrum suggests, "lightness was all. . . . [I]t was Wodehouse's genius to execute the lightness of his stories in a language that danced on the page like poetry, marrying the English style of the academy with the English slang of the suburbs." Lightness, in Wodehouse's work, is a quality endowed with a nearly mathematical clarity, like that of music.

McCrum concedes—as do I—that this lightness owes something to evasion as well as to artistic intent. For Wodehouse,

> Seriousness was risky. Seriousness meant raising too many painful questions, either about himself or about his society. Seriousness was about finding answers, which were troubling things with painful consequences. Probably he sensed that there were no answers. Personally enigmatic and elusive, he was happy to let life remain a mystery.

However culpable such an attitude may have been in Wodehouse the man, in respect of Wodehouse the artist, it is simply irrelevant. Would the novels and stories have been improved artistically by the authorial pursuit of "seriousness" and of "answers"? The answer, almost certainly, is that they would not have been so improved—that surely they would have run the risk of being marred or altogether spoiled by it, as so many lesser artists have spoiled their work. From the prosecutorial side, one may offer in evidence the case of Evelyn Waugh, another writer of genius whose novels manage to incorporate lightness with seriousness, humor with tragedy, and compound these with answers (in the sense of grounding them in fixed beliefs). But Wodehouse was an artist—and a man—of a wholly different type from Waugh, for whom the older man was simply "the Master."

Not answers and seriousness but variety and development are what we miss in Wodehouse, the man *and* the work. Almost certainly, the lack of the one is related to the want of the other; yet the missing element is perceptible, not in any individual novel or story, but rather in the *oeuvre* taken as a whole. (The same thing, to a lesser extent, may be said of Mozart or Vivaldi.) Here, finally, is the explanation for Wodehouse's personal disaster that resulted, as he himself described it, in his world being shot to pieces at the very stage in his life when all the pieces should have fallen together and held firmly that way for the remainder of it.

A century after Pelham Grenville Wodehouse (known familiarly as "Plum") took account of his literary success by noting, "I have Arrived," and 30 years after his death in 1975 at the age of 94, his ghost may find reassurance in the fact that he is still Arrived. As his friend Waugh observed in a BBC broadcast in 1961,

> For Mr Wodehouse there has been no fall of Man; no "aboriginal calamity". His characters have never tasted the forbidden fruit. They are still in Eden. The gardens of Blandings Castle are that original garden from which we are all exiled. The chef Anatole prepares the ambrosia for the immortals of high Olympus. Mr. Wodehouse's world can never stale. He will continue to release generations from captivity that may be more irksome than our own. He has made a world for us to live in and delight in.

Wodehouse the biological specimen for decades seemed ageless; as an artistic one, he still is. Agelessness, however, can be an equivocal thing, in terms of both the artist and his art. P.G. Wodehouse, once he had attained to his majority and his professional stride, changed hardly at all in the 70-plus years still left to him. Born to a comfortable upper-middle-class family and descended from a distinguished (though not aristocratic) genealogical heritage, he attended Dulwich College (Raymond Chandler and C.S. Forester also were among the school's graduates), to which he remained patriotically devoted for the rest of his life and where he acquired a lifelong passion for cricket. In his 60's, protesting against Orwell's charge that he was "fixated on his old school," Wodehouse admitted nevertheless that he was "a bad case of arrested development. . . . Mentally, I seem not to have progressed a step since I was eighteen." An exaggeration, of course, but a telling one. In all respects, Wodehouse was never more, nor less, than the quintessential middle-class conservative Englishman: too much content in his world to take an interest in politics; too poised and secure in his art to seek new direction or forward momentum for it; too committed to his work to establish more than a remote presence among his fellow human beings, from whom he struck acquaintances as being mentally, as well as emotionally, detached. The Master never moved significantly in seven decades—despite the facts that Wodehouse (with Guy Bolton and Jerome Kern) has been credited with the invention of the Broadway musical and that he was a pioneer (though not a terribly important one) in the screenwriting business in the early days of Hollywood. As for the man Wodehouse, even for an author, he led an existence that was cloistered and unadventurous, whether in England, New York, Hollywood, or on Long Island. The results are a body of work, totaling over 100 books, that amounts to an exercise in brilliant repetition, variation on a theme, and reprise, and a life that, for all its accomplishment and superficial glamour (Wodehouse quipped that he had met everyone in his time who was important—once!), must appeal finally to the outside observer for its monotony, even if the man to whom it belonged found it pleasant, full of interest, and rewarding.

England, New York, Hollywood, Long Island . . . Missing from the roster are Le Touquet, the Civil Internment Camp at Tost, and Berlin, in all of which Wodehouse's life was anything but cloistered and unadventurous. In the chapters re-

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counting Plum and Ethel Wodehouse's capture by the Germans after the fall of France, his experience as a prisoner of war, and the couple's years spent together in wartime Berlin, McCrum's readers might expect to find welcome reality breaking at last upon the aboriginal Garden of Blandings—and on its creator himself. It is a measure of the virtual impregnability of P.G. Wodehouse's imaginative and temperamental defenses, and no reflection at all on Robert McCrum's unsurpassable talents as a literary biographer, that such a breakthrough fails to occur, either in the life of Wodehouse or in Mr. McCrum's *Life*. In crisis, confinement, and forced exile, Wodehouse—the man and the artist alike—scarcely skipped a beat. To use Waugh's phrase, work never *was* suspended, nor was dreamy equipoise. The books kept coming: *Money in the Bank*, *Full Moon*, *Joy in the Morning*, *Wodehouse in Wonderland* (the author's account of his life in a POW camp!), a number of short stories . . . "Now I shall have nothing to worry about until 1944," he rejoiced from Berlin, not long after the broadcasting over Nazi radio of his prerecorded "talks" (as he called them) whose sole intent—Wodehouse always insisted—was simply to reassure his American public that he was alive, well, and at work on new books for their amusement and delectation. There is to be—we realize—no dramatic psychological climax to McCrum's biography, for the very good reason that Wodehouse's life was lacking in one. According to Robert McCrum, Wodehouse died without ever understanding, after 30 years, how he had offended in Berlin. The reason, he explains, was that Wodehouse was psychologically unable to comprehend the nature of his offense, from which his career never recovered. No understanding, no tragedy. Too bad, perhaps, for P.G. Wodehouse. Too bad, certainly, for Mr. McCrum's biography.

None of this is to imply that *Wodehouse: A Life* is a dull book. It is, absolutely, a fascinating one: biography the way biography should be done, the life of a great writer written by a great biographer who is, as well, a master critic and the adept chronicler of the social and historical period—in this instance, several periods—to which his subject belonged. Equally with Wodehouse's work itself, it offers an incentive to escape into a charmed world that is indeed, as Waugh in his inspired pessimism foresaw, oppressively less irksome than our own. c

The Balkans in Brief

by Thomas Fleming

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by Sima M. Cirkovic
Oxford: Blackwell Publishing;
322 pp., $29.95

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If every man is worthy of a biography (as Johnson suggested), then every people, no matter how small, deserves a decent one-volume history that makes the story of the Bretons or the Armenians intelligible to foreigners. That is the admirable purpose of Blackwell's "The Peoples of Europe" series, which presents the "usually turbulent history" of "the European tribes and peoples from their origins in prehistory to the present day." In any such series, some choices of authors must be more successful than others. John Wilkes, who did the volume on the Illyrians, is the outstanding historian of ancient Illyria, while David Abulafia, author of the projected volume on the Sicilians, is a tendentious modernist who seems incapable of grappling with the Christian world.

Sima Cirkovic, by contrast, is the perfect choice for a small volume on the Serbs, and his history is a no-nonsense approach to the prickly sensitivities of Balkan historiography, where national partisanship is usually more obvious than objective analysis. His small volume is a coherent presentation of the Serbian experience from the time the Slavs enter the Balkans down to the present. To his great credit, Cirkovic avoids not only the race theories that infect so much Croatian, Macedonian, Albanian, and "Bosnian" historiography but also the nationalist chest pounding that occasionally disfigures even some of the best work of Serb historians. Chauvinists in search of special pleading should look elsewhere.

Of course, all good history is written from a point of view—whether ethnic, religious, political, or all three—and Professor Cirkovic writes from the perspective of a 20th-century Serb who lived through a world war, survived the Titoist era (in which he became a leading historian), and witnessed the heartbreaking stupidities of the Milosevic and post-Milosevic eras. A man who kept his eyes open for so many years is not easily seduced by propaganda.

The Serbs has many strong points, such as the meticulous presentation of the 19th- and 20th-century Serbian monarchies and the disasters of the Great War or the straightforward and nonpartisan account of the struggle between Chetniks and Partisans in World War II and the brief but accurate sketch of communist Yugoslavia and its breakup. Others have covered this period already in English: Michael Bora Petrovich, in his *History of Serbia*; S.K. Pawlovich, in several books; Barbara and Charles Jelavich—whose solid works on the 18th- and 19th-century Balkans are not entirely free of bias—in countless books on the Yugoslav experiment, including the competent (if cautious) volume edited by Cirkovic himself in 1974. There have also been nightmares of dishonest propaganda, and the sad truth is that American libraries are stuffed with the tendentious fantasies of Noel Malcolm and Tim Judah. At the very least, these institutions ought to purchase this book as an historical corrective.

If the 19th and 20th centuries have been covered, albeit by works of varying quality, medieval Serbia has not fared so well. The most accurate information available in English has had to be teased out of regional studies, such as John Fine's excellent *History of the Medieval Balkans*, or disinterred from older volumes that are as much mythical as historical. In doing a brief sketch of medieval Serbia for *Montenegro: The Divided Land*, the best thing I could find was Professor Cirkovic's series of internet articles, not well translated, on the *History of Serbian Culture*. In less than 100 pages of this new volume, however, Cirkovic provides the first accurate and coherent presentation of medieval Serbia, from the principalities of Zeta and Raska to the construction of the Nemanjic kingdom, reaching its height under Emperor Dusan in the 14th century, down to its heroic struggle to preserve its identity under Prince Lazar, his son Stefan Lazarevic, and his grandson Djuradj (George) Brankovic.

Although scarcely even a name in an English encyclopedia, Despot Djuradj Brankovic was an amazing man. Born before the Battle of Kosovo (1389), which ended Dusan's state, he fought campaign after campaign—with the Hungarians against the Turks, and with the Turks against Hungarians—to keep his "despotate" alive. He was also one of the most

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powerful noblemen in Hungary and nearly placed the crown of Saint Stephen on his son's head. He was with the great Janos Hunyadi on the Long Campaign that drove the Turks beyond Sofia, but when the Hungarians broke their treaty with the Turks and ravaged their way across Serbia only to be defeated at another Kosovo battle, the enraged despot imprisoned Hunyadi and held him for ransom. Their bad blood endangered Hunyadi's heroic defense of Belgrade in 1456, where St. John Capistrano and his peasant crusaders saved the day, but Brankovic's subjects mercilessly killed the Turks on their long retreat across Serbia.

What days those were, when a faltering Christendom still produced men like Saint John, Hunyadi, and Brankovic, to say nothing of their allies Skanderbeg (the half-Serb, half-Albanian who held off the Turkish hordes thrown at him by Sultan Mehmed), Pope Pius II (a gentle and brilliant humanist whose greatest ambition was to drive the Turk out of Europe), and the most controversial crusader of the era, Vlad Drakula "Tepesh," who fulfilled the Serbian proverb that he who would not be a slave to the Turk must become a savage. Cirkovic's account, though necessarily brief, is an admirable epitome of a story he has told at far greater length in his own language.

Cirkovic may be at his best in handling the Middle Ages—the golden age of the Serbs—but he is both candid and lucid in his treatment of Yugoslavia, its creation, its first dismemberment at the hands of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, the era of Tito's communism, and the painful period of bated breath that followed Tito's death. These are all political minefields, especially for Serbs who lived through the era, but Cirkovic is up to the task, as he patiently treads his way between the claims of Serbs and Croats, Chetniks and Partisans.

Who should buy this book? Anyone with even a passing interest in European history; anyone who wants to understand why the Balkans has always been a powder keg; and anyone of Serbian extraction who wants to read a truthful account of this wonderful but perplexing people. I looked at someone else's copy, just to take a few notes, and only then realized not only that I had to read the whole book but that I had to own it.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of Chronicles *and the author of* Montenegro: The Divided Land.

A Dirge Transposed

by Catharine Savage Brosman

The Celestial Jukebox
by Cynthia Shearer
Washington, D.C.: Shoemaker & Hoard;
431 pp., $25.00

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"A novel," wrote Stendhal, "is a mirror carried along a road." In Cynthia Shearer's new book, the road, literally speaking, is that between the invented town of Madagascar, Mississippi, where the action is centered, and Memphis, the other major setting; metaphorically, it is the distance the South has traveled from about 1950 to the early 21st century, and, more broadly, America's current directions. The sociological slant of the mirror Shearer holds up to nature is clear from the Cataloging-in-Publication data, which categorize the novel as dealing with Africans in Mississippi, the Delta, race relations, popular music, teenage boys, and immigrants (or, as the publishers' publicity copy says, *emigrants*).

The South, always a ready topic, is familiar to Shearer; though born in Massachusetts, she was reared in Georgia and later lived in Oxford, Mississippi, where she became curator of Faulkner's house. Described as "burned out on Southern Literature's [*sic*] tragic dirge as a representation of how we live," she wants apparently to revivify literary tradition by denouncing again the Old South and portraying the New. In so doing, she suggests means of redemption for the past and remedies for present ills, which include capitalists' greed, dehumanizing urbanization, moral corruption among prosperous whites, and the destruction of a stable (if impoverished) black society.

The chief means of redemption, the leaven, is apparently the multiculturalism of the new rainbow order. The characters include a Mauritanian boy of 15 named Boubacar, newly arrived, and his uncles, all followers of Islam; illegal Honduran migrant workers, ill paid; a Chinese shopkeeper, Angus Chien, who owns the Celestial Grocery; a white farmer, Dean Fondren, who once, defying his caste, helped a black youth acquire land; and Peregrine, a student of mixed race from Princeton, with ancestral ties to the area. (Shearer thus picks up the Southern Gothic topic of miscegenation.) The relationships among these characters are generally harmonious, and their lives, it is implied, authentic. A half-crazed but beloved old white woman represents those of an earlier generation who broke with prejudice. This is Marie Abide, who, decades before, as an unmarried pregnant girl, was protected (at their risk) by a young black woman and her man, a Muslim named Prophet Pegues; love between Pegues and Marie is mentioned explicitly. Forced by social workers to give up her child, she was interned in an asylum, then returned to live in the boathouse (not the big house) of her ancestral property, thus both claiming and denying her heritage. She is portrayed as a beacon, rejecting both the old prejudices and the new commercialism. That she was born in Paris of an artist mother, makes money selling handmade birdhouses of fanciful design, and may be the daughter of Henri Matisse suggests that art, too, constitutes salvation.

The contemporary lives contrasted with these include clichés of the traditional South—bigoted Ole Miss boys and rich girls who drive to the country to drink and listen to blues but marry in their class. There are also American blacks whose degraded lives have lost the authenticity furnished by earlier suffering and religious faith. (This decline reinforces, implicitly, the Faulknerian theme of salvation through suffering.) Prophet Pegues's sons have turned to crime and drugs; the black boy whom Fondren helped, now a major landowner (said, surprisingly, to be listed by Standard and Poor), has gambled away nearly his entire fortune in the casinos that help create the new Mississippi wealth and must sell his farm machinery. Then there are the outsiders, newly rich, who buy up farmers' lands for casinos and agribusiness, and especially the contemporary urban middle class, the new Babylon, with its deep moral and social flaws—disconnected, atomistic, shopping at chain stores in identical malls or at upscale groceries for yuppies, and on whose television screens "America raged." This class is illustrated by a dysfunctional Memphis family: the father, a new "big daddy" (prosperous urban professional) and a serial adulterer, often absent; the mother, though well meaning, without authority over her children and ineffectual; and Chance, the 15-year-old son, who wears Goth costumes, spikes his hair, whines constantly, plays violent vid-

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eo games, and listens to the vilest of so-called music.

Shearer works to connect her numerous characters and plots, although some elements are puzzling (a consequence, probably, of the work's having begun as 13 linked short stories). Repeated symbols, themes, and motifs, including emblematic objects (cars, guitars, signs, jukeboxes), help make a whole of the disparate threads. On occasion, the symbolism appears too heavy (another trait Shearer's novel shares with certain Southern fiction). A major motif is music, with snatches of lyrics cited—genuine blues (contrasted to tourist blues on Beale Street), black Gospel music (Shearer attended black churches to study it), bits of folk music, rock 'n' roll, a Tejano song concerning deportation, rap, Mauritanian songs played on African instruments. Shearer described her novel as involving "a personal quest to understand the history of rock-and-roll, its origins in the Delta music, and the Delta music's origins in Africa," especially connections to African and Middle Eastern Sufism. Whether or not the novel furnishes such understanding, existential importance is attributed to music. Chance's mother uses snatches of songs from her youth as a buoy; the jukebox in the Celestial Grocery, which remains as it was in 1968, helps others hold on to their lives. Peregrine has come to Memphis with her drug-addicted boyfriend because of their interest in the blues; she wishes also to find her family roots—her great-grandmother, Ariadne, was a black servant of Marie's family—and when she discovers them, she is changed. Readers will respond variously to such musical motifs and the implicit claims made for popular music; ascribing deep social significance to it may seem far-fetched to some. Other repeated motifs are slavery, both in the American South and Africa—where, for example, Boubacar's paternal family belonged to the father of the Wastrel, now settled in Mississippi—and religion, whether that of black Protestants or Muslims. (Shearer wanted to give the book "the combined intensity of a Tantric religious text and an African-American COGIC church service.")

While readers of *Chronicles* will be in broad agreement with Shearer's critique of many features of current American life, her favoritism toward Muslims appears odd, in view of the basic incompatibility between Islam and the Occident, evidenced by attacks from Islamic extremists, the refusal to assimilate and the aggressive demands of many Muslim immigrants, and the expressed hostility of millions of Muslims to everything Western. (Boubacar would like to veil the American girls and women.) Similarly, despite the appeal of Consuela, a Honduran woman whom Angus Chien loves, uncontrolled immigration from below the border and lax enforcement of the law will not appear to all observers as desirable.

Shearer's prose is vivid but marred by inconsistencies and errors, including unfortunate mistakes in grammar (made by the narrative voice), tolerated by the publisher: *like* instead of *as* and *as if*, comma splices, dangling participles, *her* after *than*, a wrong verb tense. The allusive chapter titles, some derived from songs, seem forced. Farfetched comparisons, such as "the soft fury of rose petals," and puzzling details, such as an "upside-down cigarette" (being smoked), are distracting. A car is said to be parked a mile from a music joint, yet people there see Chance put his guitar on its seat; Chien is said to have arrived in 1938, during the time of the 20th-century Chinese exclusion. Characters demonstrate knowledge that they cannot yet have acquired. Perhaps the chief flaw in execution is in point of view. Summarizing Boubacar's thoughts (or another's), the author sometimes adopts a restricted point of view (if not quite free indirect style), putting herself as it were in his head, employing his vocabulary, assuming his limits; then, she violates this restricted viewpoint without suitable transition. What matters here is not literary orthodoxy or the dishonor done to sacrosanct principles (of Maupassant, James, Forster) but the distracting effect of such practice.

Part of the "tragic dirge" of classical Southern literature, along with nostalgia for the lost cause, was the realization that whites might be redeemed by those they had oppressed. "I would be black if I could," the pregnant Marie had said to Prophet. In Shearer's contemporary Delta, the tragic vein has changed, not disappeared—she sees the grave failures of contemporary America; but redemption is conceivable for only those native-born who are, in some way, outsiders or hold stubbornly to old roots. The rest are either weak or corrupt. While the immigrant community similarly is at the margin, not the center, its promise lies, presumably, in its radical novelty, by which it is untainted by the Southern past. Boubacar, having made enough money for a bus ticket by playing his guitar, is off to a town in upstate New York. Whether and how he will prosper and what that might mean, for himself, for America, for those he left in Mauritania—all that is unclear. What is certain is that Shearer has illustrated here what she calls her "mental affinities" with Muslims, along with her core belief that America is "many, many demographic 'realities.'" This novel is a restatement of the mantra of the new age, with reference to both popular culture (a sure attraction) and a heavy inheritance, refashioned, from the past; the author sings to the beat of the times.

Catharine Savage Brosman, professor emerita of French at Tulane University and honorary research professor at the University of Sheffield, has published numerous works of poetry and prose, including The Muscled Truce *(LSU Press).*

Felix Culpa

by Paul Gottfried

Conservatism and Southern Intellectuals, 1789-1861: Liberty and the Good Society
by Adam L. Tate
Columbia: University of Missouri Press; 402 pp., $49.95

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This sprawling and densely written 400-page study of Southern political thought, from Old Republicans John Taylor of Caroline and John Randolph of Roanoke down to Whig social theorists (and humorists) John Glover Baldwin and Johnson Jones Hooper—with wedged-in discussions of such other Southern luminaries as Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, St. George Tucker, William Gilmore Simms, and John C. Calhoun—is truly an encyclopedic work. The fact that it was carried out by a young man without a promising academic post strikes me almost as dramatically as the author's accomplishments. Tate has moved, since he completed this text, from one not often heard of institution in Morrow, Georgia, to Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. His rank (alas) remains that of assistant professor. Tate's present employer is a black Presbyterian college, originally established to educate

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former slaves.

I mention these biographical details because they illustrate a problem that cries out for a solution. Young Professor Tate has produced a study in intellectual history and in the history of political theory that 99.9 percent of those in his field, even those ensconced at elite universities, could never equal. Tate, who links his subjects to European political thought, Christian theology, and philosophy with ease and learning, can expect to earn only a small proportion of what these political intellectuals command. And as a presumptive conservative admirer of antebellum Southern thinkers, as can be inferred from his choice and treatment of his subjects, Tate may not have much in the way of a professional career ahead of him.

These points occurred to me while I was watching the Harvard faculty express, on TV, their collective rage at their liberal Democratic president, Larry Summers, for suggesting that there may be significant cognitive differences between the sexes. By now, Summers has groveled before fuming feminists and their girly-boy allies multiple times for having said something that is self-evident but incorrect, politically speaking. Would the chance to work somewhere like Harvard, among the banshees and weirdos who are reaming Summers, represent a goal for which Tate should strive? I don't know the answer. It seems to me, however, that someone who writes a book such as this one, in what must have been straitened circumstances, deserves the means to develop his scholarly bent.

An original quality of this study is the attempt to relate its subjects to a wide variety of philosophies and movements that went beyond the Southern states. While Tate stresses the thematic importance of the speech that John Randolph delivered as a congressman in December 1811, in which the speaker linked states' rights and slavery in the context of opposition to an impending declaration of war on England, this linkage was not yet clear in the minds of most Southerners. Southern politicians, like the young Calhoun, eagerly supported the War of 1812, and many Southerners still believed that slavery would eventually vanish on its own. In the 1850's, as the South drew closer to secession, Southern nationalism was not a uniformly accepted position among white Southerners. Many Southerners, while viewing themselves as different from Northerners culturally and socio-economically, persisted in defining their difference in terms of loyalty to Old Republican virtues, which were associated with yeoman farmers. There was also a peculiarity in Southern conservatism that still puzzles me but which Tate treats as basic to its character: Southerners were Burkeans when it came to society and Lockeans when they were talking about the state. Although a contradiction would appear to exist between these two positions, antebellum Southerners, who spent decades staving off federal tariffs and other forms of interference from a centralized state, found no inconsistency here.

A point that Tate addresses frontally in his conclusion is whether the South represented a "monolithic conservative tradition." Deferring to M.E. Bradford, Clyde Wilson, and Eugene Genovese, he argues that its dominant political tradition, as it developed in the early 19th century, is identifiably conservative. The South saw itself increasingly as an organic deferential society in which slavery, as Genovese observes, created an economic counterpoint to a capitalist economy based on individual gratification. But what rendered the philosophical foundations of this society less than monolithic were the heterogeneous forces that had to coexist within it, from the sporadic growth of an industrial economy to religious skepticism to Lockean and Jeffersonian individualism. What Tate leaves us with is a far more (pardon the term!) diverse antebellum South than some historians have recognized; he demonstrates how this diversity of views and interests intersected with what has been defined as Southern conservatism.

Tate notes, near the end of his book, the interpretive emphases of three historians—Wilson, Bradford, and Genovese—who tried to define Southern conservatism and to explain what made this persuasion a formative influence on the antebellum South. This, in my opinion, is the most absorbing part of the work and may deserve a volume in its own right. For Wilson and Bradford, what gave the South its organic traditions was already present in its revolt against British rule and intertwined with the attempt to preserve a landowning society built around kin relations and inherited duty. The South did not rebel primarily to reclaim universal rights but to protect local rule and to keep its land free of the depredations of British mercenaries. Once free, Southerners gravitated almost inevitably toward a states'-rights position in order to keep at bay the central regime. Although Southern politicians could be found within the Federalist and Whig camps, they, for the most part, resisted the enlargement of the federal state and of its powers. Tate notices that, when Bradford talks about Southern conservatism, he "seems to be saying that he will define the southern conservative tradition and exclude from it those he deems not really conservative." Such an approach, Tate opines, may "be legitimate for political purposes" but less so for "historical inquiry."

Although all three historians of Southern conservatism are equally worthy of respect, Tate is correct to notice the methodological merits of Genovese's approach to his subject. In his interpretively rich Introduction to *The Southern Tradition*, and (I would add) in works written while he was still a *sui generis* Marxist, Genovese examines incisively the commonalities of antebellum Southern life. Particularly in Calhoun, he finds the quintessentially "conservative southern tradition in terms of his constitutional arguments, social vision, and political strategy." But while Genovese certainly does not argue that this tradition developed "only because of slavery," he does strongly suggest that the peculiar institution provided the foundation stone on which much that was Southern was built. The culture of manners, the oft-exaggerated chivalry, and the planter society that nurtured the characteristically Southern behavioral models were connected to a slave economy; and, though elements of the older society persisted down through the 20th century—beyond "troubled race relations," as Tate and Genovese point out—they were the by-products of their earlier socioeconomic context. The Southern Calvinist theology, which Genovese has examined at length, took on a neomedieval organic aspect, as it was adapted to the pre-capitalist, planter-led antebellum South. The persistence of serfdom and manorialism on the American continent imposed the necessity of creating a conservative worldview as an alternative to capitalist individualist modernity.

To his credit, Genovese never dodges the issue of the centrality of slavery in the formation of Southern conservatism. Unlike those tedious moralists Kenneth Stampp, Eric Foner, and Harry Jaffa, however, he does not harp on that peculiar institution to beat up on the South or to justify continuing reconstructions. What Genovese shows is the function of a

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felix culpa, the ways in which the fall into a morally dubious situation instilled and buttressed attitudes and relations that an older America once admired. Needless to say, that now-faded America existed before asocial, individual gratification and the insatiable quest for equality became our highest (or only) concerns.

Contributing editor Paul Gottfried is the author of Multiculturalism and the Politics of Guilt.

Antiwar Federalists

by H.A. Scott Trask

America on the Brink: How the Political Struggle Over the War of 1812 Almost Destroyed the Young Republic
by Richard Buel, Jr.
New York: Palgrave Macmillan; 289 pp., $29.95

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The contrast between the importance of the subject of Richard Buel's new book—New England's defiance of federal authority during the years of commercial embargo and war with England—and the dullness and conventionality of the narrative reminds us that history is too important to be left to the current occupants of the academy.

To enter the author's text is to wander a desert utterly devoid of metaphor, irony, alliteration, allusiveness, analogy, or the beauty of a well-crafted sentence. Instead, we have constructions whose meaning lies buried under a pile of sand: "Considerations like these led the Federalists to cling to behaviors their opponents were anxious to discourage so as to limit Republican options as much as possible." He tries to clear things up in the conclusion by explaining that his maps, though difficult to read, are as accurate as any available:

> But describing Federalist behavior has always been subsidiary in my mind to explaining it, even though attempts at explanation beg the question of whether Federalism constituted a sufficiently homogenous entity to be comprehended under any coherent hypothesis.

Reading sentences such as that brought back the sage advice of one of my dissertation advisers: *Read only the opening and closing paragraphs of books, just enough to gauge where to place it on the scale of accepted orthodoxy—saves time for committee meetings.*

Buel adheres to the nationalist plot line, however false, with remarkable tenacity. He claims that Jefferson's doctrine of "nullification would become central in the defense of slavery." It was called upon most often to defend commercial freedom: by Massachusetts, in declaring the embargo of 1813 "unconstitutional and void"; by South Carolina, in nullifying the tariffs of 1828 and 1832. And it was used at least once *to oppose* slavery: Wisconsin, in 1859, citing Jefferson's Kentucky Resolutions as authority, resolved that the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was an "act of undelegated power, and therefore without authority, void, and of no force." It was never summoned to defend slavery.

Buel is determined to keep the rabid dogs of anarchy from being loosed on the land: He characterizes secession as equivalent to "destroying" the republic, rebukes state resistance to unconstitutional legislation as "dominating the majority," and depicts Federalists as inflexible ideologues, paranoid about Napoleon and nostalgic for the days of British paternalism, traitors bent on wrecking the noblest experiment in freedom ever known to man. He is indignant and shocked to find them celebrating the emperor's military defeats in Russia and Germany and his abdication in April 1814, for the enemy of our government's enemy should be our enemy, too.

He also accuses them of "bankrupting the government" and conspiring to bring on the banking panic of 1814. (Buel, like most of his colleagues, never learned the laws of currency or studied the principles of banking.) The truth is that the government bankrupted itself by going to war without funds or revenue. Jefferson's embargo and Madison's nonintercourse acts deprived the government of its chief source of revenue: custom duties. Then, to compound the error, Madison would not raise taxes to pay for his war. When the New Englanders would not exchange their gold for bonds, the treasury resorted to the spendthrift's favorite method of war finance: the printing press. Contractors and soldiers were paid either with interest-bearing treasury notes or the depreciating notes of the state banks. The banks hoarded the treasury notes and used them as reserves on which to inflate money and credit. The inflation drove up prices and encouraged an orgy of speculation, culminating in the inevitable run on the banks for specie, promptly followed by a suspension of payments. The banks had ruined themselves. Only those of New England remained solvent, as they had wisely refrained from buying government bonds with their own paper and had not lent money on the security of a real-estate bubble. To blame the Federalists for such financial folly is juvenile. They were under no moral obligation to lend their money to a war they opposed, nor were they unpatriotic to demand that the banks east of the Hudson River pay their debts (*i.e.*, bank balances owed).

Buel might have crafted his narrative to provide White House officials with precedents for failure caused by "other" people (liberals, anti-Americans, servants of the Antichrist) by offering evidence that America has always been burdened with the weak and traitorous. Just as neoconservatives continue to blame the press and the antiwar left for the loss of Vietnam, Buel blames the Federalists for America's failure to win the War of 1812, begging the question of whether it was prudent to wage it in the first place. (Great Britain was the superpower of her day, capable of waging war on more than one continent: The Royal Navy commanded 1,000 ships.) He claims the Federalists *forced* the Republicans to declare war as the last alternative to national "humiliation" resulting from the failure (because of Federalist opposition, of course) of Jefferson and Madison's policy of commercial retaliation. It was a choice between war and the loss of American "credibility"—that threadbare and hackneyed excuse for compounding error. Even when Federalist objections to going to war proved prescient by subsequent debacle (they predicted that the British would prevail over the French and pointed to the vulnerability of the coast—a thousand points of access for Royal Marines to pillage, rapine, and burn), Buel cannot bring himself to admit they were right:

> The support they derived from empirical fact didn't make them any less dependent on their ideology . . . Once the Federalists had pushed the Republicans into an unwanted war, there was no turning back.

This was not an unwanted war. The

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evidence (Jefferson and Madison's correspondence, administration-sponsored legislation) is irrefutable that the two hoped to go to war against Great Britain as early as the summer of 1809 with the hope of acquiring Canada—a long-standing American ambition, Arnold's expedition to Quebec having been launched a full year before Congress declared independence. Although ostensibly waged in vindication of "free trade and sailors' rights," "Mr. Madison's war," as it was derisively termed by opponents, had Canada as its real, although unavowed, objective. Think of the Iraq war. The Bush administration has proclaimed numerous reasons for bombing Baghdad (liberating women, establishing Arab voting rights, annulling the Iraqi branch of Terrorists Incorporated) but *never* the real ones—securing oil reserves and garrisoning the Garden of Eden.

There are other similarities between the two conflicts. Most support for the war came from the Southern and Western states, even though the former stood to gain little from even a victorious outcome: It was not *their* shipping that was being rerouted to Halifax or London. The South has supported every war in our history, large and small, without exception. *Every* war. Remember when Secretary Rumsfeld boasted he could take Baghdad for a song, while Shinseki spoke of 250,000? Secretary of War Henry Dearborn calculated he needed 24,000 regulars just to take Canada; yet the President had provided him with less than half of that when they started firing the cannon. Then, there was the financing—or lack thereof. The same Congress that drew the sword neglected to lay a tax. John Randolph of Virginia, a liberal aristocrat and a leader of the antiwar Republicans, mocked them openly: "Go to war without money, without men, without a navy! Go to war when you have not the courage, while your lips utter 'war,' to lay war taxes!" Hermanus Bleeker, a New York Federalist, had the bad manners to ask the whereabouts of the Army, for a count of the money in the treasury, a listing of the battle-ready ships-of-the-line. The "paper preparations" were impressive, he agreed; but "to go to war under such circumstances would necessarily bring upon us shame, disgrace, and defeat."

During the summers of 1812 and 1813, the Americans held menacing maneuvers along the northern border, but, apart from burning down the village of York (Toronto), their invading columns were repulsed or else refused to march: One mutinous regiment of New York militia declined to cross into Canada on the grounds that such an act would constitute *offensive* war, which was not what they had signed up for. True, the Americans won some brilliant naval engagements, but these were in the nature of medieval jousts and did not weaken the Royal Navy's supremacy at sea. By 1814, with France fallen and Napoleon sequestered on an island, the British went on the rampage in North America, raiding along the coasts, occupying Maine, gang-raping women in the Chesapeake, burning down the capitol, interrupting Madison's dinner.

Buel dismisses the Federalists as "failed leaders," but how does standing up for one's constituents, resisting unconstitutional encroachments on their liberties and property, averting an unnecessary war (in 1809), and refusing to participate in an aggressive one (the governors of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island withheld their militias from federal service) constitute failure? If that be failure, please give us more: more "failed leaders" to oppose Mr. Bush's never-ending but immensely profitable "World War IV: The Return of Bin Laden."

For 50 years, we have been taught that John Marshall's nationalist rulings were as inerrant as Scripture; that *states' rights* is a synonym for *segregation*; that secession was a slaveholder's plot. Yet, during a 12-year period, from roughly 1803 to 1815, the Federalists of New England endorsed Jefferson's compact theory of the Union, defended the reserved powers of the states, invoked the power of state interposition, and discussed leaving the confederacy. The Virginians were corrupted by the possession of power and, even more, by the waging of war. It was left to New England, and Delaware and Pennsylvania, to stand up for the ancient principle that only power can check power—a principle embodied in the structure of the republican confederation, put there by men who knew their Polybius, their Machiavelli, their Montesquieu.

About all this, Buel has nothing to say. Either he is unaware of the constitutional significance of the key documents of Federalist dissent, or he intentionally ignores them. How would he explain his omission of the key sentence of the Connecticut Resolves (1812): "The United States are a confederacy of states . . . a confederated and not a consolidated republic"? (Notice how the country is rendered in the plural.) How does it happen that he does not enlighten us that Massachusetts believed the union of the states was formed by a "federal compact" in which the states enjoyed "concurrent sovereignty" with the federal government? That "all her citizens" were entitled to look for "protection" from federal usurpation "in the strong arm of the state government" (Massachusetts Resolves of 1809 and 1814)? Or that the legislators of Connecticut were determined "to interpose their protecting shield between the right and liberty of the people, and the assumed power of the General Government" (Speech of Governor Trumbull, February 1809)? Perhaps Buel has neglected to print these texts to avoid lending aid and comfort to a neo-Confederate interpretation of American history, or out of fear of arming the militia with a principle, or instigating the storming of the palace. But isn't that what we need? What was it that Jefferson said about a "little rebellion now and then" being necessary to keep the rulers from plundering the treasury, betraying our liberties, laying waste the world and calling it peace?

H.A. Scott Trask is an independent historian in the process of writing "Copperheads and Conservatives: The Northern Opposition to the Civil War."

LIBERAL ARTS

HELL IN A HANDBASKET

"A 19-year-old East Texas man faces a life prison sentence for causing his teenage girlfriend to miscarry twins, even though she wanted to end the pregnancy.

"Gerardo Flores was accused of causing the miscarriage by stepping on his girlfriend's stomach. He was prosecuted under the state's new fetal protection law.

"Erica Basoria acknowledged asking Flores to help end her pregnancy. But the 17-year-old can't be prosecuted because of her legal right to abortion.

"The defense contended that Basoria punched herself while Flores was stepping on her, making it impossible to tell who killed the twins."

—*from a WISC-TV News report, Madison, WI (June 7, 2005)*

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by Scott P. Richert

Eternal Memory

As we round the curve, the driver pulls up short—at least, as short as you can when you're only going five miles per hour in the first place. As the minibus shudders to a halt, we all shift in our seats to get a better view out of the windshield. There, up ahead on the single-lane "road," mired in the clay mud and tilted to the right, toward the sheer edge of the cliff and the valley thousands of feet below, is a bread truck.

Our driver takes stock of the situation, shifts the bus into reverse, and begins backing down the side of the mountain, oblivious to the groans of his passengers. The bread truck follows, its driver preparing to take another run at the mud patch. Forty or fifty yards down, he believes that he's got the distance to pick up enough speed to carry him through. He throws the truck into drive and guns the engine.

Our driver hits the gas, too, not waiting to see whether the bread truck will make it through the mud. We're only about 15 yards behind when the truck driver cuts left again just as he hits the mud patch, and the bread truck's wheels start spinning. Our driver swings to the right—this curve is the widest spot we've seen on the mountain road, almost one-and-a-half cars (but not buses or bread trucks) wide, and, for a moment, he seems to think that he might be able to pass the bread truck on the cliff side. Then he hits the brakes, thinking better of his plan.

Less than a kilometer down the road, we had picked up a young man in a slightly oversized, rumpled suit, carrying in each hand a two-liter bottle filled either with water or a clear distilled beverage. He had thanked us profusely for offering him a ride, but he's getting impatient now, leaning forward in the front seat, tapping his foot, and he finally says something to the driver, who opens the door to let him out. As he leaps from the bus, he shouts over his shoulder, and Srdja Trifkovic, laughing, translates for the rest of us: "Thank you, but I'm in a hurry." The man scurries around the right side of the bread truck and disappears up the road.

It's been a long day already. We had departed Budva, on the Adriatic coast of Montenegro, before seven A.M., and the more realistic of us hadn't even tried to go to sleep before two. Budva's annual carnivale had taken place the night before, and the stage for the live bands and, later, d.j.'s had been set up at the base of the old city's medieval walls, right across from our hotel rooms. As if the sound system itself weren't loud enough, the wall amplified the noise. After we had returned from an excellent seafood dinner and the others had gone up to their rooms, Tom Fleming, Jürgen Elsässer, and I sat on the hotel's terrace, drinking cheap but excellent Montenegrin beer and watching crowds of young Serbs dance the night away to the rhythmic *thump thump thump* of turbofolk.

The bus ride might have been an opportunity to recapture some lost sleep, but, as we climbed up the long, winding road out of Budva back into the mountains of Montenegro, our vehicle had begun to make a rather strange noise, and any thoughts of rest were quickly banished. We stopped a few times while the driver circled the bus, opened the hood, and kicked the right front tire, before he decided that stopping in itself had lessened the noise, and we continued on our nervous way, passing a half-dozen closed service stations in Podgorica, about the time that the noise came back, louder than before.

It became clear, as he increased his speed on the other side of Podgorica, that our driver was now in his element. Away from the sea, we were hurtling through the heart of the Montenegrin mountains, traveling on a well-kept two-lane asphalt highway high on the edge of a sheer chasm, with a brilliant blue-green river at its bottom, hundreds of feet below. The bus sat up high enough that those of us on the chasm side could see, at every turn of the road, the burnt-out, rusted carcasses, usually hanging upside down on outcroppings of rock, of the cars that had failed to stay on the highway. With a few fingers of one hand on the wheel, the other pressed into service to make his point, our driver would look over his shoulder to answer Srdja's questions just as we came up on each curve.

Then we flew through a dark, two-lane

Scott P. Richert

The Serbian Orthodox monastery of Saint Mark (foreground), with the church's steeple and dome rising behind it.

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tunnel through the heart of the mountain, and, emerging on the other side, found ourselves on a rather beautifully engineered bridge, high above the valley below. Our driver slowed and pulled over to talk to a woman who, oddly, was walking across this bridge, miles from the nearest house that we've seen. She pointed over at the side of the mountain on the opposite end of the bridge, then raised her arm up and to the right, her finger extended toward the sky. Following her gesture, we saw several cars crawling, quite literally, along the side of the mountain. "That," said Srdja, "is where we have to go."

And thus began our ten-kilometer trek. Fifty minutes later, having backed even farther down the path to a point where the bread truck could pull over and let us (just barely) pass, we have made our own run through the mud and entered the final stretch. Up ahead, at a hairpin curve, a number of trucks are parked, and our driver makes the turn and then backs down into an open spot. An hour up the mountain, and now we're completing our pilgrimage on foot, walking the final hundred yards to the newly consecrated Serbian Orthodox monastery of Saint Mark, whose feast day is today, a week after Orthodox Easter.

We are met at the steps at the base of the monastery's wall by two children around eight years old—one holding a tray of blessed bread and salt; the other, a tray of *slivovitz*. We take the bread, dip it in the salt, and follow it up with a bracing shot of the plum liquor before climbing the stairs, which lead us to the clearing in front of the newly constructed church. The liturgy has just ended, and Metropolitan Amphilochius, the spiritual leader of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro (and once a guest at *Chronicles*' offices in Rockford, Illinois), is emerging from the church. The program to celebrate the consecration of the monastery, and to honor the family who funded its construction in memory of their son, is about to begin. Tom, his wife, Gail, Jürgen, Joe Bissett (the former Canadian ambassador to Yugoslavia, at the time of the breakup), Srdja, and I take our seats in the front row with the metropolitan.

As children come around with more *slivovitz* and the sun bakes our skin in the thin, dry mountain air, 4,500 feet up, Srdja tells me what he knows: how the son had left Montenegro to go fight alongside his fellow Serbs, who were being ethnically cleansed from their ancestral homes in the Krajina region, now part of the newly formed state of Croatia. How he had died defending his countrymen, and his father had found comfort in Saint Mark. How Saint Mark had once appeared on this mountaintop, and the spot had long been revered as holy.

Scott P. Richert

A guslar plays his one-stringed instrument while singing a composition in honor of the young man at the right.

The father is speaking now, telling us of his decision to give 60 gold pieces to fund the construction of the church and monastery in honor of his son. The guslar, a storyteller who, in Serbian folk customs, plays a quasireligious role, plays his one-stringed instrument and recites a litany that he composed for today—extolling the names and deeds of the ancestors of the young man, back to the first one to convert to Christianity, centuries ago. This boy, not yet a man (he was only 21), had yet, sings the guslar, the virtues of a man, as he proved in fighting and dying for his people and his Faith. He was a warrior and a Christian, from a long line of Christian warriors.

As each member of our little band of pilgrims is called up onto the stage to offer our words of celebration, time seems to melt away, and the sun stands still in the sky. To these people, so deeply steeped in history and inseparable from this rugged and beautiful land, this young man's ancestors and he are still alive, as alive as the Christ in Whom they place their faith and His evangelist to whom they dedicate this spot. If Heaven is a Timeless Moment, then moments when we are caught up out of time are a small foretaste of eternal life. Intellectually, this is not a difficult concept, and Christians have always understood their liturgy to be one of those moments out of time, but now, suddenly, I see that all of Christian life strives not just for Heaven but for moments such as this. *Thy Kingdom come*—and right now, right here, it has.

America, we incessantly repeat, is a nation of immigrants, a grand experiment, a country that threw off the shackles of the past and started anew—and therein lies our problem. We have never stopped starting anew; we constantly change the parameters of our experiment; our migration never ceases long enough for us to put down roots, let alone throw up branches. We sever the ties between generations—sometimes unthinkingly, sometimes with a glee bordering on the demonic. Many of us do not know where our grandfathers came from, and some of us do not even know their names, much less the name of the man who first committed our family to Christ, in Whom time and the Timeless meet.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream
bears all her sons away.
They fly forgotten as a dream
dies at the op'ning day.

Yet here in this place, here at this moment, the stream quiets, time and the Timeless meet, the amnesia of modern life melts away, and the New World, humbled, learns from the Old.

Eternal memory. Eternal memory. Grant to your servant, O Lord, blessed repose and eternal memory. c

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Letter From Turkey

by Peter Huys

Democracy and Adultery

◆

A bill proposed in Turkey that would have made adultery a punishable offense was retracted shortly after its introduction. Hailed as a decisive move by the European Commission, this resulted in a proposal to open negotiations on the entrance of Ankara into the European Union.

This attitude befits the ideology of the fundamental rights of the European citizen. All important economic and political efforts serve the well-being of the individual, his autonomy and emancipation, within a durable and peaceful society. The European Union must guarantee a lasting peace and personal development. On these aims, Europe is unanimous. Peace and autonomy can only prosper and flourish within a formal and plural democracy. Indeed, only democracy guarantees the complete sovereignty of the people and the citizen. Only democracy gives the same weight to each voice or conviction and guarantees that the majority in the ballot box is the only supreme authority.

During recent decades, this principle not only has become irreversible but seems to be considered a major achievement in the entire Western world. It is hailed as the final victory of civilization and the only guarantee of a real political order. Those who believe this ignore the fact that democracy is only one form of government among others and is by no means the universal remedy for all political and economic problems. History, as well as daily events, proves that this system, like all others, is not without its limitations.

Modern democracy tends to deteriorate into what is regarded as an unsurpassed and exclusively sanctifying ideology. The consensus in politics, economics, philosophy, and even theology considers this form of government to be the final and definitive horizon of our culture. Such narrow thinking creates an acute problem: With 50 percent plus one, you can always have the last word. This is democracy without any restraint, the path toward a totalitarian regime.

We have reached that point already in Europe. All those who disagree with the majority become second-class citizens. Everywhere in Europe, in opposition to the commonwealth's natural sentiments about right and wrong, laws are made and modified. Every European member-state has to conform to the imposed model, and all new candidates, including Turkey, are judged against this notion of human rights.

The Turkish adultery law may have been proposed to the parliament in Ankara in order to reduce private vendettas. In fact, such a law existed up to 1982. In 1996, a new proposition in that field was rejected by the Turkish high court. On the other hand, the latest proposal could have been a trial balloon designed to test European resistance. This seems more likely, considering the Pavlovian reaction of the European Commission against something it considers a violation of human rights. European indignation, the withdrawal of the Turkish proposal, and the subsequent relief expressed by the European Commission could have far-reaching political consequences.

Turkey has been applying for E.U. membership for several years. Her candidacy gained momentum when an Islamic government took power in 2002. The new administration looks extremely intelligent, and its reactions are skillful and thoughtful. The military influence in Turkey, though, remains decisive. The army watches over the legacy of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the father of the nation, which includes a French-style state that is neutral in matters of religion. The army comprises 800,000 soldiers, more than those of all other Western European countries together. At first, Prime Minister Erdogan's government looked to be in conflict with the army's general staff. Nevertheless, a strange dialectic between military men and government has developed. A previous Islamic government soon clashed with the army, which put an end to the experiment. Today, the situation is more complex. Both sides desire E.U. membership for Turkey.

The Soviets often courted Western goodwill by making their opponents believe in a conflict between hawks and doves within the Kremlin. Time and again, the West capitulated, in order to avoid a coup by the hawks or extremists. Nowadays, Putin has to be courted, because he supposedly is in favor of the West and free markets.

The same tactics could be used by Turkey. The Western countries think they must support the government in Ankara in order to protect human rights, advance their own model of democracy, and avoid a military coup. Much depends on it, because a country as strategic as Turkey may have no choice but to turn to Asia, after a refusal by the European Union.

Approaches made by Europe have also indicated a clear diplomatic and political commitment. The effort to reunite Cyprus is one example. Under the authority of U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan and with the intense cooperation of British diplomacy, a reunification plan for the island was proposed. Among other provisions, the proposal provided for the presence of Greek and Turkish armed forces until 2018. The treaty stipulates that this presence could be withdrawn earlier if Turkey joined the European Union before that date. If the island reunited, the new Cyprus as a whole, Greeks and Turks together, would enter the European Union. This would have meant that Turkish members would already have had a seat in the European Parliament and that Turkish would have become one of the official languages of the European community. However, the referendum in May 2004 decided differently. The Greek part of Cyprus rejected the proposal, while the Turks voted overwhelmingly in favor of it. In Brussels, disappointment and indignation were expressed.

The preamble to the European constitution is another element of the European overture toward Ankara. Any reference to the irreplaceable role of Christianity in the history of Europe has been excluded. The essence of Europe has been altered by the negation of an historically irrevocable fact. It looks now as if the Continent has no past and can, pushed forward by enlightenment and reason, proceed in whatever direction it wishes. The Turkish minister of foreign affairs quite rightly concluded that no further obstacles remained to his country's entry into the European Union.

The start of negotiations with Ankara constitutes for the European Union a gi-

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gantic precedent with an enormous geopolitical impact. Retiring president Prodi already spilled the beans by declaring that this would mean that other, smaller Islamic states could join later. The fact that Europe has no clear political structure or outline, and that no one can predict what the entry of these Islamic countries would signify, has not kept the president from making such comments.

Europe is provided with an impenetrable and fast-growing bureaucracy, less and less controlled by the council of governments. As for the European Parliament, it lacks any real control, with its 25 member-states and an equal number of languages. Nobody seems to be bothered by this, as the commission concerns itself with an increasing number of delicate issues, including immigration policy. Our countries therefore lose their effective control over crucial issues, having been taken over by "this thing," as General De Gaulle called the United Nations.

The Turkish economy is particularly feeble, and the cost of Turkey's entry will be enormous. Nobody knows how this will be financed. Turkey has a young and rapidly growing population. By her natural growth, she will soon surpass Germany, which now has 82.5 million inhabitants but is rapidly growing older. According to current trends, Turkey will have 82 million inhabitants by 2015. She also has important groups of immigrants in all European countries, especially in Germany. By all means, she would become the biggest nation of the European Union.

The Ottoman Empire has an impressive imperial history, penetrated and inspired by Islam. One can say, as Jacques Chirac did, that Islam is part of European history, provided one adds that it has been a thousand-year history of war and conquests.

Indeed, the empire of the sultans conquered a large part of Southeastern Europe shortly after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. From 1526 on, Hungary was dominated by the Sublime Porte for more than 150 years. Only after its defeat in 1683 at the gates of Vienna did the empire start to retreat from Europe. During World War I, Turkey was an ally of Germany. At Versailles, her decline was sealed. Unexpectedly, Kemal Ataturk created the new Turkey. Wanting a secular state, he curtailed Islam. Nevertheless, the great tradition of almost five centuries remains alive and provides the nation with a geopolitical vision—for instance, Ankara still believes that all Turkish-speaking nations belonging to the former Soviet Union up to the borders of China remain in their zone of influence. At the same time, she remains interested in Europe, having helped to found Bosnia, the first Muslim state in Europe, which is likely to be followed soon by Greater Albania (Albania and Kosovo).

If Ankara joins the European Union, this will mean a staggering shift of boundaries. The Turkish claims will expand Europe's interests up to China's borders, while Iran, Iraq, and Syria will become neighbors.

Furthermore, pending the negotiations, Muslim immigrations into Europe will increase. While levels are already significant, they will only grow if Turkey enters the European Union. And the official recognition of the Islamic religion and culture, and especially of the Turkish language, will encourage these Muslims not to assimilate but to preserve their Islamic identity.

The entry is scheduled for 2018. Certainly, Turkey has been warned that, if she does not act in a "democratically correct" way, negotiations can be suspended, but this looks more like an extremely dangerous illusion. (Who, by the way, will risk the suspension of negotiations, which would amount to a declaration of war with Ankara?) Meanwhile, Europe will enter more and more into a demographic winter, as a result of her own carelessness. This will reduce our possibilities of reacting much more than we realize now. In the meantime, the unpredictable adventure of the entry of almost all Eastern European countries, beginning with Rumania and Bulgaria in 2007, will unfold. This will have to happen alongside continuing negotiations with Turkey.

Pressure from the United States can play a role in these negotiations. The decision has to be made by the countries of Europe, however, not by Washington. Unfortunately, we lack a geopolitical vision as well as historic memory. We are left with a faint-hearted series of "irreversible" democratic values, with which we are trying not only to lead history but to terminate it. Reality, however, does not conform to our comfortable nihilism.

Turkey, on the other hand, is a nation still aware of the nature of politics. She does not, however, belong to Europe. This has nothing to do with racism or xenophobia but with a sound political understanding and an obvious geopolitical vision. Our cultures, traditions, and histories are not merely different; they are incompatible. This should not prevent good relations with Ankara, however: We have many common interests. But a merger with Europe can only bring chaos and provoke a sharp struggle for power.

Peter Huys is the director of nucleusopinion.net, *based in Brugge, Belgium.*

LIBERAL ARTS

CALLING MINISTER FARRAKHAN

"'There's no one perfect. . . . Jimmy Swaggart is lascivious, Mike Tyson is lascivious—but we're not criminally, at least I'm not, criminally lascivious. You know what I mean. I may like to fornicate more than other people—it's just who I am. I sacrifice so much of my life, can I at least get laid? I mean, I been robbed of my most of my money, can I at least get (oral sex) without the people wanting to harass me and wanting to throw me in jail?

"'I feel like sometimes that I was born, that I'm not meant for this society because everyone here is a (expletive) hypocrite. Everybody says they believe in God but they don't do God's work. Everybody counteracts what God is really about. If Jesus was here, do you think Jesus would show me any love? Do you think Jesus would love me? I'm a Muslim, but do you think Jesus would love me . . . I think Jesus would have a drink with me and discuss . . . why you acting like that?

"'Now, he would be cool. He would talk to me. No Christian ever did that and said in the name of Jesus even . . . They'd throw me in jail and write bad articles about me and then go to church on Sunday and say Jesus is a wonderful man and he's coming back to save us. But they don't understand that when he comes back, that these crazy greedy capitalistic men are gonna kill him again.'"

—from an ESPN interview with former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson (June 6, 2005)

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by Srdja Trifkovic

Aid and Comfort to the Enemy, Part II

In last month's *American Proscenium*, I focused on the news that Washington is reaching out to various Islamist activists opposed to the secularist regime of Bashir Assad, and notably to the supposedly "moderate" elements of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. The editorial, entitled "Aid and Comfort to the Enemy," concluded that such policies reflect either the inanity of those pursuing them or else their disdain for the values and legacy of our own society.

Within weeks, two events provided the domestic mirror image of aid and comfort to the enemy abroad. The first was an attempt by a prominent "conservative" institution in the United States to censor me under Muslim pressure. The second was a major new Hollywood movie dealing with the Crusades.

Stalin's purged comrades were routinely airbrushed from photographs and replaced with vases, chairs, or shrubs. Last April, I had an inkling of how that feels, when a flattering review of my book *The Sword of the Prophet* was abruptly removed from the *National Review Online* bookstore, under pressure from the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). This was the result of a campaign against *National Review* by CAIR, seeking the removal of my book and *The Life and Religion of Mohammed* by the late Fr. J.L. Menezes, a Roman Catholic priest, from sale by the NR Book Service. CAIR's Communications Director Ibrahim Hooper accompanied the demand with the warning that "The National Review must clarify its position on Islamophobic hate speech and offer a public apology" and warned that "anti-Muslim rhetoric" could lead to violence.

The plot thickened when it was revealed that CAIR's success in imposing its will on NR may have been the result of pressure the Muslims exerted on one of NR's advertisers, Boeing. CAIR was delighted with its campaign. "We would like to thank all those who took the time to contact both National Review and Boeing to defend Islam and the Prophet Muhammad from defamation," said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad. The fact that Boeing announced delivery of the first two Boeing 777-300ER airplanes to the Emirates on March 28—with more sales in the pipeline—provided what looked like a revealing context to the story.

Boeing's vice president for communications, Larry McCracken, told me that Boeing was not in any kind of communication with NR over this issue, however, and he gave me specific assurances that his company had not made any attempt to influence NR's decision one way or another and had no intention of doing so in the future. My call to Jay Nordlinger, NR's managing editor, was far less satisfactory. When I expressed dismay at a statement on the affair by his colleague Rich Lowry—who called it a "brouhaha"—Nordlinger merely said that his silence should not be construed as approval of, or agreement with, my view of the matter.

As I mused gloomily on how easy it was for some "conservatives" to submit to the culture of *dhimmitude*, some comfort came with the news that *The Sword* had jumped to a three-digit position on *Amazon.com*. The pleasing thought that the Muslims were doing for me what Abe Foxman had done for Mel Gibson was soon offset by e-mails informing me of Islamic gloating around the world. From Moscow, a friend sent me a link to a Muslim site in Russia that celebrated CAIR's feat.

By April 3, however, my book was back on NR's site—no statement, no explanation, no apology. This personal half-victory did not resolve the problem, of course: CAIR, an utterly nasty piece of work, tainted with terrorist links and steeped in the ideology of *jihad*, has succeeded in forcing a prominent American institution to practice self-censorship. Once the precedent is established, and the model is accepted as legitimate, it will only whet the appetites of activist Muslims and encourage their hope that the end result will be a crescent on the Capitol a generation or two from now.

The only proper way to react to CAIR's veiled threat of violence if its demands are not met is to call the Department of Homeland Security. That reaction does not require too much courage, but NR apparently had none in this case.

The best that can be said for NR is that it does not go so far as to accept the point of view of the enemy as legitimate and even admirable. They may be wimps, but they are not self-loathers.

Ridley Scott is. His *Kingdom of Heaven* is spectacular, silly, historically inaccurate, unwittingly funny, badly scripted, and pretentious. So far, so conventional, one might say: just another Hollywood big-budget yarn *à la* DeMille and *Troy*. What makes Scott's epic about the Crusades different is a political message more insidious than the standard leftist-revisionist pap we have been fed by Tinseltown for decades. That message is that, in a conflict between Christians and Muslims, the former attack, while the latter react. The true hero of the movie is Saladin, a wise warrior-king *sans peur et sans reproche*; its villains, the coarse and bloodthirsty Knights Templar.

The soap-opera story line itself had the potential for great moviemaking. What we get instead is Orlando Bloom rallying the defenders of Jerusalem with an oration in which he asserts that the holy city belongs to all three faiths equally. Saladin's captured sister is killed by Christians (an historical falsehood), but, upon entering Jerusalem, he nevertheless respectfully picks up a fallen cross (another fantasy). On such form, it is not surprising that the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee praised the film as a "balanced" portrayal of the Crusades. Even the terrorists' friends at CAIR liked the movie. A spokesman for CAIR who (unlike several of his colleagues) remains unindicted as of this writing has said that "Muslims are shown as dignified and proud people whose lives are based on ethics and morality." A French actress, whose contribution to the epic consists of flashing her sensual eyes in a dozen ways, boasted that the film will

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make all Muslims

> extremely proud and happy, because they are seen as noble, chivalrous characters . . . [T]he Arab people behaved in a more noble way than the Christian people. Saladin was such a great character. He was the hero of his time.

Kingdom of Heaven does not tell you that the Crusades were defensive in nature—a reaction to the Muslim conquest, pillage, and enslavement of two thirds of Christendom. The Crusades were but a temporary setback to Islamic expansion, but they have provided the source of endless arguments within Western academia that sought, at first, to establish some moral equivalence between Muslims and Christians and, eventually, to use the Crusades as a tool to elevate the former to victimhood and condemn the latter as aggressors.

This is a spectacular reversal of history to which *Kingdom of Heaven* makes an enthusiastic contribution. Far from being wars of aggression, the Crusades were a belated military response of Christian Europe to over three centuries of Muslim aggression against Christian lands, the systematic mistreatment of the indigenous Christian population of those lands, and the harassment of Christian pilgrims. The modern myth, so comprehensively propagated by Ridley Scott, has been promoted by Islamic propagandists and supported by their Western allies and apologists for decades.

The Crusades were initially successful because Islam was by no means a monolithic body politic. The caliphate's authority was purely notional: Egypt was under the rule of the Fatimids, a Shiite sect, while the Sunni Turks from central Asia were gaining the upper hand in Shiite Persia, as well as in Iraq, Syria, and Palestine. By the beginning of the "Glorious Twelfth," the Christian states—the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Countship of Tripoli, the Principality of Antioch, and the Countship of Edessa—controlled an unbroken but tenuously held belt of territory roughly corresponding to the Fertile Crescent between the Euphrates and the Sinai. It was long and thin: The preoccupation with the holy places and ports precluded any serious attempt to develop strategic depth or to create a viable local economic and demographic base for the new Christian states.

The necessity of defending these fragile Outremer domains, coupled with the lack of reliable local recruits, resulted in the creation of the religious orders of knighthood: the Hospitallers and the Templars. They attracted the younger sons of feudal houses and acquired considerable property both in Palestine and in Europe. Their bravery and discipline (in stark contrast to Scott's caricature) could not compensate for the crusader states' lack of cohesion, however. The help they received from the West was too scattered and intermittent. The Principality of Edessa was the first to succumb to the Muslim counteroffensive on Christmas Day 1144, and Damascus fell in 1154.

In 1169, an energetic and able prince of Kurdish blood, Salah-ed-Dîn (Saladin), succeeded his uncle as the grand vizier of Egypt and, in 1171, helped to overthrow the Shiite Fatimid dynasty. Appealing to the religious fervor of Egyptian and Syrian Muslims, Saladin was able to take possession of Damascus and to conquer all of Mesopotamia except Mosul, threatening the Kingdom of Jerusalem from all sides. On July 4, 1187, his army defeated the Christians on the shores of Lake Tiberias, and he entered Jerusalem on September 17. The fortified ports of Tyre, Antioch, and Tripoli were the only remaining Christian strongholds.

After Saladin's death, his possessions were divided among his lesser successors, who lost Jerusalem again to the crusaders in 1229; but the Christians' strength and unity was waning. By 1244, the city fell again to the Muslims, who maintained control until 1918. Mamlukes destroyed the venerated Church of the Nativity in Nazareth. Caesarea capitulated under the condition that its 2,000 knights would be spared, but, once inside the city, the Muslims murdered them all. When Antioch fell to the Muslims, 16,000 Christians were put to the sword, and 100,000 are recorded to have been sold as slaves.

It is possible to make a great movie out of this bloody history and to give it depth. Indeed, while the Crusades lasted, the warriors on both sides developed a degree of grudging respect for each other. They believed, and by the tenets of their religions they were justified in believing, that they were doing God's work. They fought each other, but there were long periods of truce when they traded, met, talked, and learned from each other. The crusaders discarded their heavy armor and adopted the flowing robes better suited to the local climate, while Saladin's warriors grasped and willingly accepted something of the knightly code and mystique that had been quite alien to the early followers of Muhammad. And yes, Saladin was a brave and capable soldier. He repeatedly expressed admiration for the piety of Christian pilgrims, and, a generation or so later, Joinville refers approvingly to Saladin's interesting observation that a bad Muslim could never make a good Christian. The lords of Outremer were often far lesser men. Some had found it convenient to strike all kinds of unseemly bargains with their foes and allied themselves with Muslim rulers against both Constantinople and new groups of crusaders who were threatening to upset the balance of power.

One can be critical of the Crusades, but primarily because of the great damage the Fourth Crusade inflicted on the Christian East. As for the slaughters, what the crusaders did to the Muslim inhabitants of Jerusalem in 1099 was as bad as what the Muslims had done to countless Christian cities before and after that time. By the end of the 13th century, the last crusader remnants in Palestine and Syria were wiped out. That was the end of the real Crusades, but it was by no means the end of *jihad*. That same *jihad* that conquered and reconquered the Holy Land continues in earnest today. With his *Kingdom of Heaven*, Ridley Scott has joined the ranks of its abettors. He, too, is aiding and comforting the enemy.

The quest for "moderate Islamists" abroad, the appeasement of CAIR at home, and the propagation of a self-hating view of history everywhere are jointly indicative of a malaise that makes the outcome of the "War on Terror" uncertain at best. The American interest mandates first and foremost the rediscovery of the self, the refirming of the moral fiber that makes everything else possible. When Pat Buchanan takes over *National Review*, CAIR is outlawed, and Mel Gibson makes a *real* movie about the Crusades, we will know that there is light at the end of the tunnel. c

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THE OLD REPUBLIC

Why Taft Matters

by Mark Royden Winchell

Even in that prehistoric time before television, Robert Alphonso Taft seemed an unlikely leader of men. Looking like a small-town grocer, he spoke in what one admirer conceded was a "whiney Midwestern voice." When trying to pose as a deep-sea fisherman, Taft once allowed himself to be photographed in a boat that was visibly tethered to the shore, even as he was shown landing an already dead sailfish. (A reporter for *Time* dubbed him the "Dagwood Bumstead of American Politics.") Despite an aloof and sometimes awkward manner, Taft sought the presidency three times. The son of former president William Howard Taft (who once had to summon aides to extricate his more than 300-pound girth from a White House bathtub), young Bob wistfully referred to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue as "the old homestead." Even though he never occupied that address in his own right, Taft was so widely respected as a legislator that, a mere four years after his death, a bipartisan committee of the Senate named him (along with John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, and Robert La Follette) as one of five members of that body who "left a permanent mark on our nation's history."

Although the vast majority of Americans under the age of 70 would be hard-pressed to identify Taft, much less explain his importance, he has recently become a hero to conservatives displeased with the way their movement has been hijacked by ex-Trotskyites, Cold War liberals, and Israeli fifth-columnists. In the September 13, 2004, issue of the *American Conservative*, Rep. John Duncan (R-TN; one of only six Republicans in Congress to vote against the invasion of Iraq) labeled Taft's views on foreign policy the "traditional conservative position." What Duncan neglected to mention was the fact that Taft's personal political ambitions were consistently thwarted by the crusading internationalists of his own day.

At the time he was elected to the Senate in 1938, Bob Taft was known as an articulate opponent of the New Deal with minimal credentials in foreign policy. Had he been willing to go along with the Wall Street financiers who were eager to involve the United States in the war in Europe, he might well have gotten the Republican presidential nomination two years later. His fate was probably sealed when he attended a dinner party thrown by Ogden Reid, publisher of the *New York Herald Tribune*, on June 2, 1940. The rest of the guest list consisted of the British ambassador and several prominent American Anglophiles. Before the evening was over, Taft got into a shouting match with a utilities executive named Wendell Willkie, who said he would vote for Roosevelt before backing any Republican who did not favor aiding the Allies. Although Willkie was a registered Democrat who had never held any position in government, the East Coast internationalists were soon backing him for the GOP nomination. They flooded the delegates to the convention with fake telegrams supporting Willkie and packed the stands with demonstrators paid to chant, "We want Willkie." The Wall Street crowd got what it wanted—a stooge who would parrot the interventionist line while handing Roosevelt a predictable, if unprecedented, third term.

Although revisionist historians have tried to tar all the nonimperialists of the late 30's and early 40's as protofascist, Taft's reluctance to plunge America into another world war was a sentiment shared by principled leftists such as Norman Thomas (whose pacifism Taft and his wife, Martha, admired) and Dwight Macdonald. In his book *Prophets on the Right* (1975), the left-wing historian Ronald Radosh writes of Taft's stand against intervention:

> Almost alone among political leaders, he had called attention to the negative effects of concentrated executive power, and had condemned the usurpation of an independent congressional role by the executive. . . . He had [also] warned his fellow citizens against creating a Pax Americana at the war's end, and he spoke of the possibility of a new imperialism breeding what would later be called the military-industrial complex.

Like all loyal Americans, Taft supported the war after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Unlike Arthur Vandenberg and so many other former "isolationists," however, he did not become a born-again internationalist. Even if war was forced upon us, he had no illusions about its creating a New World Order. On June 25, 1941, Taft noted the irony of Roosevelt talking about the Four Freedoms while shipping arms to the Soviet Union. "If through our aid Stalin is continued in power," he asked, "do you suppose he will spread the four freedoms through Finland and Estonia and Latvia and Lithuania? Do you suppose that anybody in Russia itself will hear of the four freedoms after the war?"

Taft was willing to stand alone against war-crazed jingoists. In October 1946, for example, he gave a speech at Kenyon College in which he criticized the war-crimes tribunal at Nuremberg because the defendants were being tried for violating an *ex post facto* statute. Taft's own wife, who agreed with his reasoning, had warned him not to give the speech for fear of being considered sympathetic to Nazism. (He had already gone against the tide by opposing both the internment of Japanese-Americans and the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.) For a man who was still hoping to secure his party's presidential nomination, the speech was a public-relations disaster. Prominent Republicans repudiated Taft's position, Democrats denounced him, and the *CIO News* ran his picture next to that of two Germans acquitted at Nuremberg. The caption read: "SENATOR ROBERT ALPHONSO TAFT AND FRIENDS." By 1956, however, Taft's lonely position had won him a chapter in Ted Sorenson's *Profiles in Courage*.

Today, Taft's vision seems so timely because, in the late 40's and early 50's, he was among only a handful of prominent American conservatives to express *any skepticism* concerning the holy struggle against communism. In his own time, that skepticism made him appear a throwback to the 1920's and 30's. In our time, he seems more like a premature foe of neoconservative triumphalism. As late as 1951, Taft wrote to Norman Thomas:

> I see no reason for the President

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> and the Secretary of State and everybody else calling the Russians names on every occasion. I realize they are impossible to deal with, but I really do not believe that they intend to start a third world war.

No doubt, Taft's pique with the administration was exacerbated by the fact that much of the strategic advantage the Soviets enjoyed was because of concessions Roosevelt and Truman had made to Stalin. The Democrats were rattling sabers over a situation they had helped to bring about.

In addition to the blood and treasure that were spent in time of war, Taft believed that conflict abroad inevitably limited freedom at home. (As we are now discovering during the *Jihad* on Terror, perpetual war—especially of the undeclared variety—leads to such enormities as the PATRIOT Act.) Even before Japan was defeated, Taft warned against peacetime conscription in a speech delivered at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on May 30, 1945. "It is useless to destroy totalitarianism in Germany and Japan," he declared, "and then establish them in the United States." If a large standing army was necessary, Taft believed that good pay and treatment would be enough to raise a sufficient number of volunteers. When faced with the argument that draftees would receive needed discipline, he replied: "My own opinion is that we need more initiative and original thinking and less discipline rather than more."

Because the president is uniquely qualified to speak for the nation as commander in chief, Taft believed that it is all the more imperative for the chief executive to consult with Congress *before* policy is made. In contrast, the Truman administration made policy in secret and then demanded congressional support in the name of bipartisanship. In the 1948 election, Truman actually used the issue of bipartisanship to Red-bait the Republican right. According to this scenario, the communists were supporting Henry Wallace's Progressive Party in the hope of splitting the liberal vote and electing a Republican president. "The Communists want a Republican administration," Truman charged,

> because they believe its reactionary policies will lead to confusion and strife upon which Communism thrives. . . . [T]he Communists have real reason to hope that Republican isolationism will exert its pressure within the Republican party, and, in a period of time, they can take over nation after nation.

Might this absurd statement by the protector of Alger Hiss have been the inspiration for David Frum's diatribe about "unpatriotic conservatives"?

Although Taft has been branded an isolationist, he was really a pragmatist who wished to hold the communist beast at bay without committing American troops to another ground war in Europe. He favored using American air and sea power as a deterrent against Soviet aggression, while insisting that the European countries be their own first line of defense. (To assist them, he supported the Marshall Plan, despite his misgivings about the cost.) Joining NATO, however, represented too open-ended a commitment. As Taft noted in a speech delivered to the Senate on July 11, 1949, changes in government in one or more of the countries signing the pact might result in our arming a nation today only to see those same arms used against us in the future. (As we recently learned in Afghanistan and Iraq, yesterday's strategic ally can be today's terrorist.) For Taft, providing aid to a specific country under compelling circumstances, or even extending the Monroe Doctrine to Western Europe, was far different "from arming half the world against the other half." When the Senate approved NATO membership by a vote of 82 to 13, Taft was among the dissenters.

If Taft seemed soft on Europe, he was hard on Asia, which he believed to be far more vulnerable to communist advances. (The shock of Pearl Harbor made him particularly wary of threats from the East.) Despite the imperious way in which Truman involved the United States in defense of South Korea, Taft thought that General MacArthur should have been given a freer hand in waging that war, just as he thought that the United States should have shown greater support for Chiang Kai-shek in his battle against Mao. Once Chiang had been defeated and MacArthur sacked, however, Taft was too much of a realist to encourage a direct confrontation between the United States and Red China. Ironically, his very moderation on this point helped cost him the Republican nomination in 1952 by alienating such influential members of the China lobby as Richard Nixon and William Knowland of California and Barry Goldwater of Arizona. In his last major speech, which was delivered for him by his son in May 1953, even as the senator himself was dying of cancer, Taft warned against sending American soldiers to the continent of Asia, which would have included the embattled French colony of Vietnam.

Had Taft not died when he did, he might have continued to be the Republican leader in the Senate throughout the 50's and 60's. (In 1970, he would have been 81 years old, which is hardly a prohibitively advanced age in the era of Strom Thurmond.) In *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (1951), Taft tried to define an enlightened internationalism, which would allow us to fight communism while still putting American interests and American ideals first. If his strategic vision was still a work in progress, it was nevertheless motivated by sound principles. In this, his only book, we find arguments against both nation-building and preventive war, as well as an unwillingness to destroy concrete American liberties simply to bestow an abstract version of those same liberties on countries where they are neither understood nor appreciated. If Bob Taft opposed the New Wilsonianism, we must remember that it was the defeat of his father (the man in the bathtub) that spawned the original version.

Mark Royden Winchell's next book, Reinventing the South: Versions of a Literary Region, *will be published by the University of Missouri Press in January.*

CHARITY

Pimping for Africa

by Anthony P. Ellison

Thirty years after publishing *Black Mischief*, his hilarious novel about Abyssinia, the only independent African monarchy at that time, Evelyn Waugh wrote that the unthinkable in 1932 had come to pass. The Europeans were departing Africa, leaving the administration of the benighted natives to Ministries of Modification presided over by Basil Seals of the United Nations.

The prescient Waugh had envisaged the toppling of Haile Selassie ("Highly Salacious"); but, life imitating art, the real-life agent, the questing journalist

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Jonathan Dimbleby, and the preposterous events that followed his appearance in Ethiopia in 1973 were straight out of the other great Waugh satire, *Scoop*.

Dimbleby was granted entry into Ethiopia (Abyssinia revivified) after offering to create yet another film commending the development efforts of His Supreme Majesty, the Lion of Judah. He traveled north to check out the rumors of famine. Shaken and perturbed, he returned to screen his television reportage in a film entitled *Ethiopia: The Unknown Famine*. A juxtaposition of shots of thousands of famished skeletons with His Venerable Highness serving his dogs morsels of meat from a silver platter scandalized British viewers. Within two years of the showing of the film, the leader of the DERG (the committee of a hundred junior officers), Mengistu Haile Maryam, throttled to death the 83-year-old Selassie, *alias* Ras Tafari. Even Waugh could not have dreamed up the absurdity of Highly Salacious being the center of a religion, Rastafarianism.

Mengistu's tyrannical Marxist client regime ended with the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991, when he and 3,000 followers were bundled out to a haven in Zimbabwe, but not before murdering an estimated half-million civilians, suppressing all ethnic and regional movements, and plunging the northern region into another famine in 1984-85.

Michael Buerk's BBC documentaries of the famine, shown in October 1984, spurred a minor rock artist, Bob Geldorf, to form Band Aid and cowrite (with Midge Ure) "Do They Know It's Christmas?" The record, issued a month after Buerk's documentary, involved 40 British and Irish pop performers, sold three million copies in Britain, and grossed eight million dollars worldwide. Hollywood entrepreneurs immediately spotted the potential and replicated Band Aid's project, forming U.S.A. For Africa, who recorded the song "We Are The World," written by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie, with Quincy Jones as producer. By early 1985, Geldorf and promoter Harvey Goldsmith had hatched the idea of a global telethon from Wembley Stadium in London and JFK Stadium in Philadelphia. Live Aid played for 16 hours on July 13, 1985, to an audience of 1.5 billion. More than $140 million for the Band Aid Trust was collected.

Geldorf screamed, "We won" and, following a celebrated altercation and meeting with Mrs. Thatcher, received an honorary knighthood in 1986. The 25-year-old Bono (Paul Hewson), lead singer of U2, who performed at Live Aid (and with the original Band Aid), had discovered his antinomian philosophy and a cause—Africa. Infused with grace, he and his like-minded rock stars were to lead their ecstatic followers in the crusade against every and all injustice, whether poverty, disease, war, or racism. The global audience validated the moguls of the corporate culture and the culture they had peddled. Thanks to their promotion, rock 'n' roll was the *lingua franca* that linked the developing with the developed world. Their critics could no longer charge them with pushing the profitable but sensationalistic and destructive nihilism of the counterculture, for, through Live Aid, they had aroused universal, life-enhancing sentiments by mobilizing their clients' Dionysian rock. The secular humanists were reassured, as the media pundits, described by John Lloyd in the *Financial Times* as the cardinals of the Holy Media Church, displaced the sanctimonious clerics. The doyen of Britain's media cardinals, Michael Buerk, pronounced, in his autobiography published appropriately 20 years after his documentaries on the Ethiopian famine, that these were "by far the most influential pieces of television ever broadcast."

Unfortunately for Africans, Buerk's shocking documentaries were influential, while the considered writings and measured utterances of Lord Peter Bauer, an Hungarian émigré and professor at the London School of Economics, who had dared to point out the dangerous idiocy of postcolonial development policy, were brushed aside. Among Bauer's heretical utterances were some that averred, disconcertingly, that aid is a transfer of money from poor people in rich countries to rich people in poor countries. The nature of a country's institutions and the abilities of her peoples, not an inflow of Western money, determine whether people adapt and survive or perish. It was the duty of government to ensure individual freedom, safeguard private property, and enforce contracts because opportunities for private profit, not planning and aid, were the determinants of economic growth. The corollary was damning: African societies are regressing to the Stone Age because they have been cursed with extensive government involvement in economic life and showered with aid.

Bauer pointed to the absurdity of governments taking on ambitious tasks when they were unable to fulfil even the elementary and necessary functions of government. He had identified the institutional flaw that proved fatal to the postcolonial development strategies of the IMF and the World Bank. They were obligated to transact with the recipient governments, while the donor governments were disinclined to stipulate conditions that would in any way constrain their opportunities with the recipients to trade arms, extract mineral wealth, and strike contracts advantageous to their clients. The African people quickly discovered that the loans that had allegedly been contracted on their behalf had been dissipated and stolen, leaving them with a heavy burden of debt. The governments of postcolonial Africa were invariably incompetent, and, once the loans were paid over, they became, also, irredeemably corrupt. The nationalists who assumed power at independence, and the military dictatorships that overturned them, destroyed what was left of their societies' indigenous institutions, replacing them with kleptocracies, which, as George Ayittey showed in his book, *Africa Betrayed*, plunged their respective peoples into poverty, civil strife, war, and starvation.

While Buerk's sensationalistic documentaries conveyed the deleterious consequences of the regime in Ethiopia and emphasized the contribution of colonization and natural disasters to the devastation that had befallen the African peoples, they failed to emphasize that this murderous oligarchy was supported by the Soviets and Castro's Cuba. More significantly, Buerk, and most other commentators, failed to discuss the culpability of the governments of Africa. The tragedy was that many of the aid agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) that Buerk's documentaries energized failed to enhance the problem-solving capabilities of the recipients and, thus, further lowered the chances of survival of millions of Africans. The zealots were passionate egalitarians who reviled self-seeking Economic Man transacting through the competitive market process. To these ideologues, all was to do with nurture and nothing to do with nature, and so children were regarded as blank slates to be filled with their knowledge and propaganda, rather than young minds with varied and inherited capabilities. They were reacting against the Reagan and Thatcher administrations, which, in turn, were relieved to have troublemakers pursuing their futile quests in Africa and not in the United States or Great Britain and

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delighted that their noble, if futile, efforts were largely financed from voluntary rather than state contributions.

The subsequent calamitous history of Africa confirmed the intractability of inter-group conflicts, the further diminution of individual adaptability as a result of the zealot's programs, and the prudence of the Reagan-Thatcher strategy.

And there, perhaps, the issue would have stayed but for Tony Blair. He renewed public interest in the cause of saving Africa for a reason: In his search for a ready-made project suitable for re-packaging and delivery in 2005, when Britain holds both the Presidency of the European Union and the G8, he came up with Bono's organization "DATA" (which stands for the wiping out of Debt, the eradication of Aids, and fair Trade). Blair deftly interconnected DATA's three-pronged agenda to the G8 countries via the core issue of extreme poverty, which he, along with Bono, allege is the root cause of AIDS—and, conveniently, of terrorism, too.

Accordingly, in May 2004, Blair launched his "Commission for Africa." The objective is to take a fresh look at Africa's past, present, and future. Consisting of politicians including Prime Minister Meles of Ethiopia and Trevor Manuel, the South African minister of finance—the commission is modeled on the "Brandt Commission," which Willy Brandt headed in 1977. Its fresh-look purpose was to propose a restructuring of the global economy to facilitate the equitable development of poor economies and to ensure that such economies could compete in global markets.

The Brandt Commission's two reports, *North-South* (1980) and *Common Crisis: North-South Cooperation for World Recovery* (1983), addressed the issues of agricultural development, trade, energy, international monetary and financial reform, and aid, with a view to solving problems of environmental degradation and population growth, stimulating global economic growth, and limiting the arms race.

The recommendations of the Brandt Reports to restructure the international trade and financial regimes in favor of the developing nations were unanimously endorsed by the United Nations and discussed at subsequent G7 summits. But the international community, instead of uniting to promote development as Brandt had intended, proceeded to become hopelessly divided over globalization, the emergence of which had been made possible by the leaders in the G7 themselves who had liberalized international trade, financial, and communications regimes across the globe.

Opposing the allegedly deleterious consequences of globalization were a noisy and largely ineffectual, if not all corrupt and self-serving, assortment of NGO's and agencies of the United Nations. They took up the challenge of promoting, in defiance of the new globalization regime, the Brandt Report's recommendations, which included, *inter alia*, the development of renewable forms of energy, an international tax on arms, the rollback of trade barriers by industrial countries on exports from developing countries, and the establishment of international fair-labor standards and an international investment regime that would create reciprocal obligations on recipient countries and corporations.

But, in the end, despite all the huffing and puffing of the developed nations, only the Scandinavian countries and Holland seriously attempted to meet the Brandt Commission's central recommendation—namely, that developed nations increase their foreign aid to one percent of GDP by 2000.

Despite the repeated pillage of Scandinavian aid by anti-apartheid leaders in South Africa, the international organizations continue to claim that this thoroughly discredited instrument will propel the disintegrated sub-Saharan societies into the developed world. And, of course, these poverty pimps fail to mention that taxpayer-supplied aid always propels upward the lifestyles of the numerous aid bureaucrats, no matter whether it contributes one iota to the suffering masses of Africa.

Their latest pimping is formulated in the portentous "UN Millennium Development's Goals." In terms of this masterpiece of self-delusion, eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, reducing infant mortality by two thirds, and achieving universal primary education can allegedly be attained by 2015 if the donor countries keep to their promise, made in Monterey, Mexico, in 2002, to devote 0.7 percent of their GDP to aid. Jeffrey Sachs, special advisor to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, who is notorious for having implemented the disastrously unsuccessful shock therapy of market-oriented reforms in Russia, claims the eight Millennium goals will be achieved if $150 billion is donated in aid each year for the next ten years.

Sach's pimping has succeeded in eliciting promises of U.S. and U.K. taxpayers' monies. In 2002, the Bush administration announced the "Millennium Challenge Account," which aims to support "the poorest nations that rule justly, invest in their people and encourage economic freedom." A further $15 billion has been pledged to fight AIDS in Africa and the Caribbean.

Blair, for his part, displayed his commitment to his Commission for Africa by promising that the government of 2013 would, on behalf of British taxpayers, "donate" (*sic*) 0.7 percent of GDP. As a means of financing the UN Millennium Development Goals, Blair's chancellor of the exchequer, Gordon Brown, has proposed an "International Finance Facility" scheme, which would double aid to $100 billion per year by issuing bonds in the capital markets, using donor countries' long-term funding commitments as collateral.

Poul Nielson, the E.U. development and humanitarian-aid commissioner, skewered this proposal when—just as the constructed clamor started to rise at the end of 2004 with the launch of the new version of the Band Aid song "Do They Know It's Christmas?"—he charged Blair and Brown with imposing on the children of the donor countries the burden of repayment of long-term debt, while showering themselves in glory for their brave efforts to save Africa.

Such dreary home truths are, however, lost on the glittering, self-promoting rock star Bono who, in his speech to the Labour Party Conference, grandly called upon the conference to honor "the John and Paul of the development stage," the rock artist *manqué*, Tony Blair, and Gordon Brown.

But it is Nielson, not Bono, who must have the last word here. Tony Blair bears no resemblance (to his credit, let it be said) to the musical pothead and martyr John Lennon, but he is surely a dead ringer for Basil Seal, the check-bouncing bounder of Waugh's *Black Mischief*.

As so, the ragtag Parade of Instant Solutions to the intractable problems of the impenetrable continent and its transoceanic spawn rolls on through the centuries with its usual complement of buffoons, charlatans, and snake-oil salesmen firmly in control.

Anthony P. Ellison, who is currently completing a book, "An Empire Beyond Its Apogee," lived in South Africa from 1990-1998.

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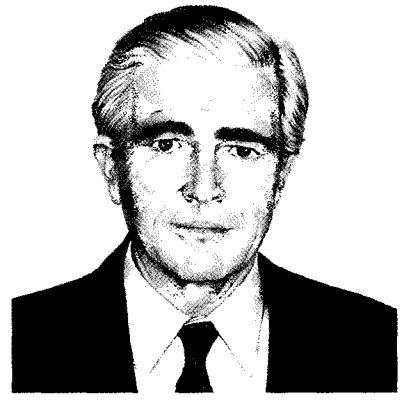
by George McCartney

Fact and Fiction



Kingdom of Heaven
Produced and distributed by
Twentieth Century Fox
Directed by Ridley Scott
Screenplay by William Monahan

Crash
Produced and distributed by
Bull's Eye Entertainment
Directed and written by Paul Haggis

As I watched *Kingdom of Heaven*, Sir Ridley Scott's most recent directorial effort, a feeling of *déjà vu* descended upon me, the story line being that familiar. It concerns Balian of Ibelin (Orlando Bloom), a resourceful 12th-century blacksmith who uses his peculiarly modern sensibility to defend himself from royal intrigues. Now, where had I seen this before? Faster than you could sing the opening bars of "Thou Swell, Thou Witty," there appeared in my mind's eye the image of Bing Crosby in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. In this 1949 adaptation of Mark Twain's satire, Crosby plays Hank Martin, a singing blacksmith who takes a blow to the head and awakens in sixth-century England, where he wows the superstitious Saxons with his 20th-century sensibility and know-how. Balian has much in common with Bing, although he is not nearly as credible since he hasn't the excuse of time travel to explain his modern temperament. Scott and his screenwriter William Monahan have willfully fictionalized the historical Balian to make him conform to today's pieties. Balian, in their telling, is a tolerant multiculturalist who respects Middle Eastern Muslims and displays a skeptical attitude toward Christian theological claims, quite remarkable at a time when faith was more a matter of character than of choice.

The film focuses on the role Balian plays in the events surrounding the Muslim siege of Jerusalem in 1187 between the Second and Third Crusades, a campaign waged by the justly respected Kurdish leader Saladin. The battle ends when Balian chooses to surrender the city rather than sacrifice all of its Christian inhabitants to a Muslim army that vastly outnumbers his forces. Scott dramatizes this so that we understand that the Muslims, though a mite cruel at times, were nowhere near as savage as the Christians who had taken Jerusalem in 1099, slaughtering everyone within the city walls and then plopping on their knees to give thanks to their God. Saladin, by comparison, displays genuine chivalry by readily agreeing to Balian's request that the surviving Christians be allowed to leave the city unmolested. While this account is broadly true, the devil is in the details, which, as dramatized here, are quite misleading. There's no gainsaying that the crusaders were merciless in capturing Jerusalem in 1099, a fact that haunts the Islamic mind to this day. It is no accident that Osama bin Laden refers to our forces in Afghanistan and Iraq as crusaders. Scott, however, deliberately ignores Islam's earlier campaign of ruthless conquest in the largely Christian kingdoms of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Spain from the seventh century onward. The Crusades were in large part Christian Europe's response to the growing threat from the Islamic East. As for the film's portrait of Saladin, it is grossly simplistic. While it is true that Saladin was often magnanimous to those he conquered, his clemency was always conditional. In the fall of Jerusalem, for instance, the Christians had to pay for their release, something Scott overlooks. The thousands who could not meet the price were sold into slavery. Still, it must be said that, when the city's Christian noblewomen begged for the release of their husbands captured in earlier battles, Saladin graciously acquiesced. He also let the elderly leave without paying ransom. Deeds such as these gained him a reputation for honor among Christians.

Nevertheless, Saladin's mercy was never disinterested. He agreed to Balian's request because the Christian leader had warned him that his warriors were ready to fight to the death, killing as many Muslims as possible and destroying the city, including its holy places. Saladin, who had not been averse to massacring defeated opponents in other battles, obviously judged lenience the better part of valor in this instance. Besides protecting Jerusalem, he needed to preserve his forces for what he knew would be future battles against his Arab enemies.

When we first meet Scott's Balian, he is a man bereft of wife, child, and faith. After his son died, his wife committed suicide, and his village priest insisted on beheading her corpse to punish her impiety. In retaliation, Balian runs the padre through with a burning sword from his forge. To complicate matters, Godfrey the Crusader shows up in the form of Liam Neeson, still sporting his no-nonsense Alfred Kinsey crewcut. After asking Balian's forgiveness for having sired him without his mother's consent, he invites his nonplussed son to return with him to Jerusalem, suggesting he may find solace for his sorrows there. Godfrey then gives Balian a three-minute sword lesson that enables the young commoner to thrust and hack with the best of knights and entitles him to join their ranks. Arriving in Jerusalem, Balian quickly wins Christian and Muslim admiration with his innate rectitude and finds himself being inducted into a small but influential coterie of unusually broad-minded crusaders who grow misty-eyed whenever they talk about their friendship with Muslims. So highly does Balian rise in the estimation of these wise and wholly mythical men that Jerusalem's monarch, Baldwin IV, a.k.a. the Leper King, chooses him to be his successor. Balian nobly rejects the offer since it would involve marrying Baldwin's sister, the seductive Sibylla. Although he is already trysting with her, marriage would require killing her present husband, the dastardly Guy de Lusignan. Even though this villain deserves death for breaking the hard-won truce the Christian softies have made with the Muslims, Balian refuses to sully

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himself in such an underhanded plot.

Much of this is malarkey. Balian was a nobleman by birth, there was no dalliance between him and Sibylla, and he was never in the running to become king. What is more troubling about Scott's film, however, is Balian's modern multicultural and anti-Christian consciousness. He goes around saying wholly improbable things for a man of his time. "I'm outside of God's grace," he murmurs with a dour existentialist air at several points. Going to his climactic meeting with Saladin, he speaks of Jerusalem's holy places—the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Dome of the Rock, the Al-Aqsa mosque—as being "everything that drives men mad." In Scott's telling, faith itself is the culprit of the story. Had men been properly enlightened in secularism, they would never have gone to war over supposedly sacred stones.

On the eve of Saladin's attack, Balian proves himself almost as adept as Crosby in King Arthur's court, devising nifty mechanical stratagems to keep the Muslim hordes at bay. If only he had the wherewithal to make the .38-caliber pistol Bing devised in *Connecticut Yankee*, he might have blasted his way to triumph. But I suppose such an anachronistic liberty would not have pleased Scott. He just couldn't forego the shaming spectacle of a Muslim general being more merciful in his victory than his Christian counterparts had been in theirs. When, with some embarrassment, Balian recalls how the crusaders had dealt with Jerusalem's Muslims nearly a century earlier, Saladin smiles tolerantly and allows that his policy is of a different sort. Take that, you stiff-necked crusaders! When Scott closes the film with a reference to the seemingly intractable animosities in the Middle East today, it is clear that he thinks the West is to blame. Alas, he has a point, no matter how partial it may be.

Unlike Scott's commitment to surface factuality, Paul Haggis's episodic film *Crash* is openly stylized, yet it has more reality in one of its 5-minute vignettes than *Kingdom* manages to convey throughout its entire 145 minutes.

Haggis decided to make *Crash* after becoming a victim of a carjacking. This personal brush with street violence seems to have provoked him to do something almost unheard of in America. He actually brings some truth into our usually airbrushed discourse on race and class. The result is a film so startling that you will find yourself breaking into laughter time and again, even when events turn ghastly.

The film begins with two respectable-looking 20-year-old black men walking through a Los Angeles mall. Anthony (Ludacris, a.k.a Chris Bridges) is complaining about the restaurant they have just left. Would the waiter have made white folks wait over an hour to be served? When his buddy Peter (Larenz Tate) reminds him that their waitress was black herself, Anthony is not mollified. He sees racism everywhere. He points out that, as the only blacks on the street, they should be scared of the "over-caffeinated whites" surrounding them—yet it's the other way around. Why? Peter answers tentatively: "Because we have guns?" On cue, a wealthy white woman clutches her hand bag as she and her husband walk past the youths on their way to their parked Lincoln Navigator. A moment later, Anthony and Peter draw their guns as casually as if they were taking out their cell phones and carjack the startled couple's SUV.

The episode is at once shocking and oddly funny. It rudely breaks the unwritten rules for portraying black criminals on screen. They are never supposed to be shown as this sociopathic. The incident becomes funnier when we meet the white couple (Sandra Bullock and Brendan Fraser) at their home later the same evening. Fraser, it turns out, is the district attorney. He has called in his staff to help him in this moment of crisis. He is not focused on getting the SUV back or bringing the carjackers to justice, however. Far from it. He is obsessed with the grit that has just been thrown into the well-oiled machinery of his election campaign. "Why," he groans, "did these guys have to be black?" He must somehow placate African-American voters for the sin of having been a white victim of black crime. He demands his aides find him a worthy black person on whom he can pin a medal. Hilariously ugly, his racial calculation is also stinging, since he shouts it at the black woman who is his chief of staff.

Rather than tell a conventional story, Haggis has assembled 12 mininarratives, each a chapter from the true story of our lamentable and unmentionable racial politics. He then has these episodes collide in varying patterns as though they were the shifting shards in a kaleidoscope. Characters who ordinarily would never meet are brought into bewildering intimacies by the concatenation of racial misunderstanding and paranoia. The carjacking gives a bigoted white cop the opportunity to harass an upscale black couple who happen to be driving the same model SUV. It also introduces us to the Hispanic locksmith whom the D.A. hires to replace his home's locks. This fellow's color and underclass appearance turn the attorney's wife venomous. She automatically assumes he will pass on copies of the new keys to his "homies." This, in turn, triggers in the locksmith an anger that will get him into trouble with an irascible Iranian. On and on it goes. While it is improbable that these people would literally run across one another's paths in the film's dramatically compressed time, it is nevertheless true that the conflicts of race and class are constantly rippling through our nation, linking us in ways generally invisible to our daily vision. The art of Haggis's film is in making these connections disconcertingly visible.

All the actors are exceptionally fine, but it is Don Cheadle as an honest but deeply flawed detective who holds the movie together. After his unmarked patrol car is rear-ended on the freeway in the opening scene, he dazedly speculates that accidents may be our desperate attempt to connect with one another in an otherwise obsessively insular society. His partner thinks he must be in a state of shock to talk such nonsense. "You've lost your frame of reference," she gently explains. Indeed. That is just what Haggis is trying to accomplish. He wants to deprive us of our fuzzy frame of reference so we can see what is right before our eyes.

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